THE

LETTER

Writ by the laſt

Aſſembly General

OF THE

Clergy of France

TO THE

PROTESTANTS,

Inviting them to return to their Communion.

TOGETHER

With the **Methods** *propoſed by them for their* **Conviction.**

Tranſlated into *Engliſh*, and Examined

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LONDON,

Printed for *Richard Chiſwell* at the *Roſe* and *Crown* in S. *Paul's* Church-yard.

M DC LXXXIII.

THE PREFACE.

THE fate of moſt that Anſwer any particular Book or Treatiſe, is ſuch, that one may be juſtly diſcouraged from undertaking it: For beſides the great trouble the Anſwerer is put to, in following his Author in all his Digreſſions, and perhaps Impertinences, and the ſmall game he is often engaged in, about ſome ill-ſounding expreſſion, or ſome miſunderſtood period; the iſſue of the whole buſineſs in matters of Controverſies, comes at beſt to this, That it may be confeſt his Adverſary has been too unwary in ſome aſſer-

tions, or unconcluding in ſome of his Arguments: But ſtill men retain their old perſwaſions: And if one whom they had ſet up for their Champion, ſhould happen to be baffled, they will only ſay that they miſtook their man; and he being made quit the Stage, another is ſet in his room. So that at moſt their engagement proves to be of the nature of a ſingle Combate, in the iſſue of which only two Individuals, and not two Parties are concerned. But when a whole Body ſpeaks in one Voice, here the undertaking of a ſingle perſon, in oppoſition to them, may be thought indeed too hardy and bold; but yet the debate becomes of more conſequence, at leaſt to the one ſide, becauſe the Credit of thoſe againſt whom he writes, is ſo well eſtabliſhed, that a ſatisfactory Anſwer to what they offer as the ſtrength of their cauſe, muſt needs have great effect on theſe who examine thoſe matters Critically, and judge of them Impartially.

The World hath been filled with the noiſe of the Converſions lately made in France; *but it has been generally given out that the violences of Monſieur* de Marilliac *and the Souldiers, and the Payments diſpenſed by Monſieur* Pelliſſon, *have been the moſt prevailing Arguments hitherto made uſe of. That Great King has indeed interpoſed in this matter, with a Zeal, that if it were well directed, might well become one who reckons theſe to be his moſt eſteemed Titles, that he is the* Moſt Chriſtian King, *and the* Eldeſt Son of the Church. *But amidſt all this noiſe of Converſions, we have heard more of the Temporal than Spiritual Sword; and except in the violences and out-rages of ſome of the Clergy, we have not heard much of any ſhare they have had in this matter. It is true, the Celebrated Explication of their Faith, written ſome years ago by the then Biſhop of* Condom, *now of* Meaux, *has made*

a great ſhew, and moſt of the Converſions are eſteemed the effects of that Book: And the eminent Vertues of the Author, joined with that great gentleneſs, by which he inſinuates himſelf much into the Hearts of all thoſe that come near him, have perhaps really wrought much on ſome, whoſe Conſciences were by other motives, diſpoſed to be very eaſily perſwaded. Soft words and good periods, have alſo had ſome weight with ſuperficial Enquirers. But that Explication of his, which may be well called a good Plea, managed with much Skill and great Eloquence for a bad cauſe, has been ſo often, and ſo judiciouſly anſwered, that I am confident ſuch as have conſidered theſe Anſwers, are no more in danger of being blinded with that duſt, which he has ſo ingeniouſly raiſed: For it muſt be confeſſed, That his Book deſerves all the commendations that can be given it, for every thing except the ſincerity of it, which (I am

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ſorry to ſay it) *is not of a piece with the other excellent qualities of that great Prelate.*

But now we have before us a work of much more importance, in which we may reaſonably conclude the ſtrength of the Roman *cauſe is to be found: Since it is the unanimous voice of the moſt learned and ſoundeſt part of that Communion: For while the* Spaniards *have chiefly amuſed themſelves with the Metaphyſical ſubtilties of School-Divinity, and when the* Italians *have added to that, the ſtudy of the Canon Law, as the beſt way for preferment; the* French *have now for above an Age been ſet on a more ſolid and generous purſuit of true Learning: They have laboured in the publiſhing of the Fathers Works, with great diligence, and more ſincerity than could be expected in any other part of that Church; where the watchful Eyes of Inquiſitors might have prevented that Fidelity which they have obſerved in*

publiſhing thoſe Records of Antiquity: So that the ſtate of the former Ages of the Church is better underſtood there than in any other Nation of that Communion. Nor has the Secular Clergy, or Laity, only laboured with great faithfulneſs in thoſe enquiries, ſuch as Albaſpine, De Marca, Godeau, Launnoy, Huetius, Rigaltius, Valeſius *and* Baluſius; *to name no more; but even that Order, which is not ſo much admired over the World for great ſcrupuloſity of Conſcience, has produced there ſeveral great Men, that are never to be named but with Honour, ſuch as* Fronto Ducæus, *and* Petavius; *but above all,* Sirmondus, *through whoſe Writings there runs ſuch a tincture of Candour and Probity, that in matters of fact, Proteſtants are generally more enclined to acquieſce in his authority, than thoſe of his own perſwaſion are; which made them afraid at* Rome *to give him free acceſs to their*

their Manuſcripts. Nor is the Learning of the Gallican *Church that for which they are chiefly to be eſteemed: It muſt alſo be acknowledged, that from the ſtudy of the Ancient Fathers many of them ſeem to have derived a great meaſure of their Spirit, which has engaged diverſe among them to ſet forward as great a Reformation as the Conſtitution of their Church can admit of. They have endeavoured not only to diſcover the corruptions in Morality and Caſuiſtical Divinity, and many other abuſes in the Government of the Church, but have alſo infuſed in their Clergy a greater Reverence for the Scriptures, a deeper ſenſe of the Paſtoral Care, and a higher value for Holy Orders, than had appeared among them for divers Ages before. Some of their Biſhops have ſet their Clergy great Examples: and a diſpoſition of Reforming mens Lives, and of reſtoring the Government of the Church according*

cording to the Primitive Rules, hath been such, that even those who are better Reformed, both as to their Doctrine and Worship, must yet acknowledge that there are many things among them highly Imitable, and by which they are a great reproach to others, who have not studied to copy after these patterns they have set them. The World will be for ever bound to Honour the Names of Godeau, Paschall, Arnauld, and the Author of the Essays of Morality; and those thoughts which they have set on foot are so just and true, that though their excellent Bishops are now almost all gone off the Stage, and are not succeeded by men of their own tempers, yet it is to be hoped, that these seeds so sown do still grow where they find a soil disposed for them. For though such Notions are not very grateful to some whose Interests bias them another way, or to others whose ill lives make them look on all Books of a severe Piety, and that design a

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ſtrict Diſcipline, as ſo many Satyrs writ againſt themſelves; yet to ſuch as are not prepoſſeſſed nor corrupted, nothing does ſo eaſily enter, and continue ſo fixed as thoſe Maximes which they infuſe; particularly thoſe of the neceſſity of a Vocation of the Holy Ghoſt *before one enters into Holy Orders, and a ſtrict application to the care of Souls, after one has engaged in them.*

Truth and Goodneſs are in their Natures ſo Congenial, *that there is no way ſo certain to lead men to the knowledge of the Truth, as to form their minds inwardly to ſuch a ſenſe of Piety and Goodneſs, as may make them fit receptacles of Truth. Thus did the Heathen Philoſophers begin at the purging their Auditors minds, by their cleanſing Doctrines before they communicated to them their ſublimer Precepts. Among the* Jews, *the Sons of the Prophets were long prepared in a courſe of Mortification and Devotion, that ſo they might become capable of*

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Divine illapſes, and our Saviour began his Inſtructions with the correcting the ill Morals of his Followers and Hearers; and did not communicate the higher Myſteries of his Doctrine to them till they were well prepared for it; ſince, as he ſaid himſelf, the way to know his Doctrine, *whether it was* of God or not, *was to* do his will, *which makes the ſenſe of the Soul become as exact in judging of its object, as a ſound ſtate of Health makes the Organs of our Bodily Senſes fit to repreſent their objects diſtinctly to us. And therefore that Church that has advanced ſo far in the reforming the Morals of the People, and the Conduct of the Clergy, may be very juſtly eſteemed the beſt, as well as the moſt learned part of the* Roman *Communion: Though it is not to be denied, but the Jealouſie that thoſe men of better Notions have fallen under, what by the Intereſt the* Jeſuites *have gained both at Court and in the* Sorbonne, *what*

what by the willingneſs that is in the greateſt part of Men, particularly of corrupt Eccleſiaſticks, to love looſer Principles, and what by the odious names of Innovators, of Men enclined to Hereſie, Schiſm or Faction, is ſuch, that as on the one hand they are lookt at with an ill Eye, as a ſort of men that are neither good Subjects to the King nor to the Pope; So they on the other hand, to free themſelves from theſe imputations, have perhaps departed too much from theſe ſincere principles which they had at firſt laid down, and have betaken themſelves to ſome Arts and Policies that do not become men ſo enlightned as they are. But I will not enlarge more on this, becauſe I honour them ſo much, and have learned ſo much from them, that I will rather bewail, than inſult over their failings. But though they themſelves are thus ſuſpected, yet ſuch is the force of Truth, and the Evidence of thoſe Maximes which they hold, and the

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World is ſo poſſeſſed with them, that even their greateſt Enemies are forced to yield to them, rather perhaps becauſe they dare not ſcandalize the World, by keeping up abuſes, of which all people are convinced, than out of any inward affection they bear to a ſevere or Primitive Diſcipline. By this means it is that there is now nothing more common, in all the parts of France, *than to talk of a Reformation of abuſes, even in thoſe places where the Prelates Example is perhaps one of the moſt conſpicuous of all the Abuſes.*

To what has been ſaid this may be added, That their Glorious and Conquering Monarch being now poſſeſſed with this Maxime, That he will have but one Religion *in his Dominions, every one there looks on the reducing many of thoſe they call* Hereticks, *as a ſure way to obtain his favour, and ſo to attain to great Dignities in the Church. It is certain,*

tain, the moſt refined Wits there are now ſet on work to bring out the ſtrength of their cauſe with the greateſt advantage that is poſſible. Therefore the Aſſembly General of their Clergy being called together, (and being ſo much the more engaged to ſhew their Zeal againſt Hereſie, that they might cover themſelves from the Reproaches of ſome that are more bigotted, for their compliance with the King in the matter of the Regale,*) hath now made an Addreſs to all the* Calviniſts *of* France, *inviting them to return to their Communion; to which they have added Directions to thoſe that ſhall labour in theſe Converſions; which they call* Methods, *by which their minds are in general to be wrought upon, without entring into the detail of theſe Arguments, by which the Controverſies have been hitherto managed. I confeſs, when I read theſe firſt, I*

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was aſtoniſhed at moſt things in them, and could have almoſt thought that a Veron *or a* Maimbourg *had publiſhed their Viſions in the name of that* Auguſt Body; *but I know the Preſs there is ſo regulated, and the Conſtitution of that Kingdom is ſuch, that ſo groſs an abuſe could not be put upon the World. Beſides, when I had over and over again laid all theſe methods together, I found that indeed all the ſtrength of their Cauſe lay divided among them: So that if there is no extraordinary force in them, it is becauſe the Cauſe can bear nothing that is more ſolid or more convincing. I doubt not but the Letter, and theſe Methods will be examined in* France, *with that clearneſs and exactneſs that may be expected from the many extraordinary Pens that are there. But I being earneſtly deſired to write ſomewhat concerning it, have adventured on it. I have*

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first begun at home, and since here we have the concurring voice of so great and so learned a Church concerning the methods of converting Protestants, I hope it will be no unacceptable thing to this Nation to put these in English, *together with such Reflections on them as may be more easily apprehended by every Reader that has but a due measure of Application and Judgement, though he has not amused himself much with deep studies of Divinity. I shall hold in the general and to the Rational part as they do, without going further in any particular Enquiry, than shall seem in some sort necessary.*

I ought to make great Apologies for so hardy an Enterprize, but I cannot do that without giving the Reasons that determined me to it, which is not at present convenient. Therefore I must only in gene-

ral beg the Readers Charity, and that he will not impute this attempt to any forwardneſs of mine, or to any extravagant opinion I may have of my ſelf, as if I were fit to enter the Liſts with ſuch great perſons, to whom I pay all that Reverend eſteem which becomes both to their Characters and Qualities, and to whom I know better what is due, than to preſume to ſay any thing in contradiction to them, if I were not led to it by that which I owe to Truth, *and to the* God of Truth: *After I have examined both their Letter, and the Methods added to it, I will venture further, and offer on the other hand ſuch Conſiderations as are juſt and lawful prejudices againſt that Communion, and are ſuch as ought, at leaſt, to put all men in doubt that things are not right among them, and to diſpoſe them to believe that matters in Con-*

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troverſie between them and us ought to be examined more exactly and impartially, and that upon a general view, the prejudices lie much ſtronger in our favours, than againſt us.

The Letter writ by the Assembly of the Clergy, to the *Calvinists* in *France*.

The Arch-Bishops, Bishops, and the whole Gallican *Clergy, assembled at* Paris *by the Kings authority, wish to their Brethren of the* Calvinist *Sect, Amendment, and a return to the Church, and an Agreement with it.*

Brethren,

THE whole Church of Christ does now of a great while groan, and your Mother being filled with holy and sincere tenderness for you, does with regret see you rent from her Belly, her Breasts, and her Bosome, by a voluntary Separation,

tion, and continue ſtill to ſtray in the Deſart.

For how can a Mother forget the Children of her Womb, or the Church be unmindful of her love to you that are ſtill her Children, though you have forgot your duty to her? The Infection of Errour, and the violence of the *Calviniſtical* Separation having drawn you away from the Catholick Truth, and the purity of the Ancient Faith, and ſeparated you from the head of the Chriſtian Unity. From hence is it, Brethren, that ſhe groans and complains moſt grievouſly, but yet moſt lovingly, that her bowels are torn: She ſeeks for her Sons that are loſt, ſhe calls as a Partridge, as a Hen ſhe would gather them together, as an Eagle ſhe provokes them to fly; and being again in the pangs of travel, ſhe deſires to bear you a ſecond time, ye *little Children*, that ſo Chriſt may be again formed in you, according to Truth, in the way of the Catholick Church.

Therefore we the whole *Gallican* Clergy, whom the Holy Ghoſt has ſet to govern that Church in which you were born, and who by an uninterrupted Inheritance hold the ſame Faith, as well as the ſame Chairs, which thoſe

thoſe Holy Biſhops held, who firſt brought the Chriſtian Religion into *France*, do now call on you, and as the Embaſſadors of Chriſt, we ask you, as if God did beſeech you by us, Why have you made Separation from us?

For indeed, whether you will or not, ſuch are your circumſtances, that you are our *Brethren*, whom all our Common *Father* did long ago receive into the adoption of Children, and whom our common *Mother*, the *Church*, did likewiſe receive into the hope of our Eternal Inheritance. And even he himſelf who firſt bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey the Truth of the Goſpel, the Standard-bearer of your profeſſion, did at firſt live amongſt us as a Brother, in all things of the ſame mind with us. Were we not all of the ſame houſhold? Did we not all eat of the ſame Spiritual meat? And did not he perform among us the mutual Offices of Brotherly Charity? See if you can find any excuſe either to your Father, your Mother, or your Brethren, to take off the Infamy of ſo wicked, ſo ſudden, and ſo raſh a flight; of this dividing of Chriſt, the renting the Sacraments of Chriſt, an impious War againſt the members of Chriſt, the accuſing the

Spouſe of Chriſt, and the denial of the Promiſes of Chriſt? Excuſe and waſh off theſe things if you can: But ſince you cannot do it, then confeſs that you are fallen under that charge of the Prophet, *An evil Son calls himſelf righteous, but he cannot waſh off his departure.*

Wherefore then, *Brethren*, have you not continued in the root with the whole World? Why did you break the Vows and the Wiſhes of the Faithful, with the Altars on which they were offered? Why did you intercept the courſe of Prayer from the Altars, from whence was the aſcent to God? Why did you then with Sacrilegious hands endeavour to remove the Ladder that came down to thoſe Stones, that ſo Prayers might not be made to God after the cuſtomary manner. Other Sectaries hitherto have indeed attempted that, not that they might overthrow the *Altar* of Chriſt, but that they might raiſe up their own *Altar*, ſuch as it was, againſt the *Altar of Chriſt*. But you, as if you had deſigned to deſtroy the Chriſtian Sacrifice, have dared to commit a crime unheard of before theſe times. You have deſtroyed the Altars of the Lord of Hoſts, in which the Sparrow (Chriſt) had choſen to himſelf an Houſe, and the Tur-

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tle (the Church) a Neſt, where ſhe might lay her young.

It was this Schiſmatical fury that brought forth theſe things, and allhat has followed ſince, either of Wars againſt the Church, or of Errours againſt the Ancient Doctrine: Nor would we have thoſe things aſcribed ſo much to your Inclinations as to the nature of Schiſm. But this is that upon which we expoſtulate with you in particular, and which we ask of you without ceaſing, *Why have you made the Schiſm?* And unleſs you anſwer this, how well ſoever you may ſpeak or write of other things, it is all to no purpoſe.

We do not doubt, but in anſwer to this, you will make uſe of that old and common defence of all Schiſmaticks, and that you who upon trial, know that it is not poſſible to ſhake the Doctrines believed by us, will begin to inveigh againſt the Morals of our men, as if holier perſons, who love ſeverer Laws, could not hold it creditable for their reputation, or ſafe to their Conſciences, to live with ſuch men. Theſe are the things forſooth, *Brethren*, for which the Unity of Chriſt is rent by you, the Inheritance of your Brethren is blaſphemed, and the Vertue and Truth

Truth of the Sacraments of the Church are deſpiſed: Conſider how far you have departed from the Goſpel in this.

Theſe things that you object were leſs conſiderable both for number and weight, or perhaps unknown, and may be not at all true. But if they had been true, and acknowledged, and worſe than they were, yet thoſe Tares ought to have been ſpared by Chriſtians, for the ſake of the Wheat: for the vices of the bad are to be endured, becauſe of the mixture of the good. *Moſes* endured thouſands that murmured againſt God. *Samuel* endured both *Eli*'s Sons and his own, that acted perverſly. Chriſt himſelf, our Lord, endured *Judas* that was his Accuſer, and a Thief, and alſo his Betrayer. The Apoſtles endured falſe Brethren, and falſe Apoſtles that oppoſed them and their Doctrine: And S. *Paul*, who did not ſeek his own things, but the things of Jeſus Chriſt, converſed with great patience among thoſe that *ſought their own things, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt.* But you, dear Brethren, not only have not endured the Church, your Mother, and the Spouſe of Chriſt, but have rent, torn, and violated her Unity: And that you might thus rend, tear and violate her

you

you have charged the blemiſhes of private perſons on her, whom Chriſt has cleanſed with the waſhing of Water through the Word of Life, that he might preſent her glorious to himſelf, without either ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing.

What remains then, Brethren, but that for your ſakes we follow that advice of the Holy Ghoſts, *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the Sons of God.* And that by the Bowels of Mercy, which you have hitherto torn; by the Womb of the Church, your Mother, which you have burſt; by the Charity of Brethren, which you have ſo oft violated; by the Sacraments of God, which you have deſpiſed; by the Altars of God, which you have broken; and by every thing, Sacred or Divine, that is worſhipped either in Heaven or Earth; we exhort you with the Hearts of Brethren to amend, to return, and to be reconciled. And what indeed remains, but that you, forgetting the Schiſm, and remembring your Mothers Breaſts, ſhould again come home, where there are ſo many hired Servants that have bread enough, while you cannot gather up crumbs for ſatisfying in any ſort your Spiritual hunger,

hunger, being in a dry and untrodden Deſart. Why then do you delay or withſtand this? Are you aſhamed to be reckoned Children with thoſe, among whom the eldeſt Son *Lewis* is daily erecting new Trophies to the Church his beſt Mother: Who, by reaſon of your wilfulneſs, is in this only not entirely happy, that although he is daily decreeing many things both religiouſly and piouſly for maintaining Chriſtianity, yet he ſees ſome of his own Subjects, who have of their own accord, forſaken the Religion of their Country, and have betaken themſelves to foreign rites, being Apoſtates from Religion, and deſerters of the Ancient Warfare, to continue ſtill in their Errour. And this Moſt Chriſtian King did lately in our hearing ſay, That he did ſo earneſtly deſire to ſee all thoſe broken and ſcattered parcels brought back to the Unity of the Church, that he would eſteem it his Glory to compaſs it with the ſhedding of his own Royal blood, and even with the loſs of that Invincible Arm, by which he has ſo happily made an end of ſo many Wars. Will you then, *Brethren*, envy that Palm of Victory to this moſt Auguſt Prince, and your King that has ſubdued ſo many and ſuch mighty

mighty Enemies, that has taken ſo many ſtrong Towns, and has conquer'd ſuch great Provinces, and is eminent in his Triumphs of all ſorts, and yet would prefer this Victory to all the reſt?

But, *Brethren*, while we thus call upon you, and exhort you to the Counſels of Peace, do not you ſay, *Seek us not*, for this is the language of Iniquity, by which we are divided, and not of Charity, by which we are Chriſtians. Remember that the Spirit of Truth and Peace has commanded us by the Prophet not to ceaſe to ſay to thoſe who deny that they are our Brethren, *You are our Brethren.*

What time can offer it ſelf more fitly for calling you back to the *Roman* Communion than this, in which Pope *Innocent* governs the *Roman* Church; whoſe life and manners being formed according to the ancient and ſevere diſcipline, preſent a perfect pattern of Holineſs to the Chriſtian World: So that it will be both for your Honour as well as for your Happineſs, and a mark of great Vertue in you, to joyn your ſelves to him who is ſuch an eminent cheriſher of all Vertue.

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Therefore as for you that need a Phyſician, that are the members of Chriſt, and noble ones too, bought with the ſame price, but are torn from the Head and Body of the Church, through the wicked fraud of all our common Enemy, we pray you by the Eternal God ſuffer your ſelves to be healed, receive this admonition, and this humble Prayer of ours: For ſuch is our gentleneſs and compaſſion towards you, that we can confidently uſe the loweſt expreſſions poſſible. And do you in a Brotherly manner take hold of this occaſion, that we offer you with ſuch brotherly love, that ſo at laſt, through the grace of our God, the night of ſtupifying Errour being diſſipated, the Light of Divine Truth may ſhine daily more and more; ſuffer not the weak and ignorant part of the Chriſtian flock to periſh, becauſe of ſome Jealouſies that you have raſhly taken up againſt our Faith: Do you think it unſeemly to diſcover your Diſeaſe to the Phyſician? Give place both to Repentance and Phyſick, and addreſs your ſelves humbly to God, and eſteem this to be that which is chiefly, and only honourable in Chriſtians.

But

But if you will with obſtinate minds refuſe to do this while we thus exhort you, if you will not be overcome by Prayers, nor bended by Charity, nor wrought on by Admonitions to a Reconciliation, the Angels of Peace will weep bitterly; but yet for all that we will not leave you to your ſelves, though that were but juſt to be done to perſons ſo exceſſively obſtinate; we will not give over our ſeeking for the Sheep of Chriſt among the Hedges and Thorns; and when we have done all by which your minds ought to have been reconciled to us, at laſt *our Peace*, which is ſo earneſtly and ſincerely offered to you, when it is rejected by you, *ſhall return to us*: Nor will God any longer require your Souls at our hands. And as this your laſt errour will be worſe than your former, ſo your laſt end will be worſe than any thing you have formerly felt. But Brethren, we hope better things, and things which accompany ſalvation.

Francis Arch-biſhop of *Paris*, Preſident.
Charles Maurice Arch-biſhop and Duke of *Rheims*.
Charles Arch-biſhop of *Ambrun*.

James

James Arch-biſhop and Duke of *Cambray.*
Hyacinth Arch-biſhop of *Alby.*
Mi. Phelipeaux Arch-biſhop of *Bourges.*
James Nicholas Colbert Arch-biſhop of *Carthage*, Coadjutor of *Rouen.*
Lewis of *Bourlemont* Arch-biſhop of *Bourdeaux.*
Gilbert Biſhop of *Tournay.*
Nicholas Biſhop of *Riez.*
Daniel Biſhop and Earl of *Valence* and *Die.*
Gabriel Biſhop of *Autun.*
William Biſhop of *Bazas.*
Gabriel Biſhop of *Auranches.*
James Biſhop of *Meaux.*
Sebaſtian Biſhop of *St. Malo.*
L. M. Ar. de Simiane Biſhop and Duke of *Langres.*
Fr. Leo Biſhop of *Glandeves.*
Lucas Biſhop of *Frioul.*
J. B. M. Colbert Biſhop and Duke of *Mountauban.*
Charles Biſhop of *Montpellier.*
Francis Biſhop of *Mande.*
Charles Biſhop of *La Vaur.*
Andrew Biſhop of *Auxerre.*
Francis Biſhop of *Troyes.*
Lewis Biſhop and Earl of *Chalons.*
Francis Biſhop of *Triguier.*
Peter Biſhop of *Bellay.*

Gabriel

Gabriel Biſhop of *Conſerans.*
Lewis Biſhop of *Alet.*
Humbert Biſhop of *Tulle.*
J. B. D' Eſtampes Biſhop of *Marſeilles.*
Fr. de Camps deſigned Coadjutor of *Glandeves.*
De St. George deſigned Biſhop of *Miſcon.*
Paul Phil. de Luſignan.
Lud. d' Eſpinay de St. Luc.
C. Leny de Coadelets.
La Faye.
Cocquelin.
Lambert.
P. de Bermund.
A. H. de Fleury.
De Viens.
F. Feu.
A. de Maupiou.
Le Franc de la Grange.
De Senaux.
Parra Dean of *Bellay.*
De Boſhe.
M. de Ratabon.
Clement de Pouudeux.
Bigot.
De Gourgues.
De Villeneuve de Vence.
J. F. de l' Eſcure.
Peter le Roy.
A. de Soupets.

A. Argoud Dean of *Vienna*.
Gerbais.
De Bauſſet.
G. Bochart de Champigny.
Courcier.
Cheron.
A. Faure.
F. Maucroix.
De la Borcy.
De Francqueville.
Armand Bazin de Beſons, Agent-General of the Clergy of *France*.
J. Deſmaretz Agent-General of the Clergy of *France*.

Re-

REMARKS

On the former

LETTER.

THE tender expreſſions with which this Letter begins, give the World ſome hopes that the *Gallican* Clergy have bowels of Compaſſion, for thoſe they call their *Brethren* and *Little Children*, though the figures of a *Partridge* or an *Eagle* are too forced to flow from affections much moved. But the ſeverities now exerciſed in moſt parts of *France* look like *Eſau's hands*, while the Clergy ſpeak with *Jacob's voice*.

The many terrible Edicts that come out daily againſt thoſe of that perſwaſion, and the much greater ſeverity with which they are executed, do not very well agree with this melting language. Perhaps ſome may think thoſe Edicts are Civil things, and that the

Intendants or other Officers who execute them, being of the Laity, therefore the Clergy are no way concerned in it. But if the blame of this is taken off from them, it muſt be laid ſomewhere elſe. It is notoriouſly known that the King himſelf is not at all of a bloody diſpoſition, but is merciful and gentle: So that for all the hard meaſure that many of thoſe who are forced to fly hither for refuge, feel, yet they do acknowledge that they owe it to the Kings tenderneſs to his people, and averſion from Cruelty, that it is not worſe with them; and that they are not maſſacred and deſtroyed to be the effect of his Clemency and Protection. And of this he has lately given the World a double aſſurance, both in the Letters he ſent to the Biſhops of *France*, and in thoſe he ſent with them to the Deputies in the ſeveral Provinces, Printed together with this Letter of the Clergy. In the firſt are theſe words, *Recommending to you above all things the managing the Spirits of thoſe of that Religion with Gentleneſs; and to uſe no other force but that of Reaſon, for the bringing them again to the knowledge of the Truth, without doing any thing againſt the Edicts and Declarations, by the vertue of which the exerciſe*

of

of that Religion is tolerated within my Kingdom. This is a little varied in the ſecond Letter thus, *I recommend to you above all to manage the Spirits of thoſe of that Religion with gentleneſs, and to hinder the doing of any thing that may be an Invaſion on that which is granted them by the Edicts and Declarations made in their favours.*

We will not have ſo criminal a thought of ſo glorious a Prince, as to ſuſpect his ſincerity in this: and therefore when it is as viſible as the day, that thoſe Edicts are broken almoſt in every branch of them, we muſt conclude that either the King is not well informed of the nature of thoſe Edicts, or is not acquainted with the violation of them: And ſince no King, how great ſoever, can ſee but with other mens Eyes, and that it is not to be imagined that a Prince ſo employed, as he is, can have read and examined the Edicts granted by his Anceſtors in favour of that Religion, it muſt be concluded, that thoſe who have procured the paſſing thoſe late Edicts that contradict the former, have either flatly impoſed on him, by making him believe they were not contrary to them, or have found out ſome ſlight Equivocation in the

words of the former Edicts, upon which that Great King has been induced to paſs thoſe Edicts, which have come out of late ſo frequently againſt them. In this whole matter no political conſideration is ſo much as pretended, the Intereſts of State lie clearly againſt it. The deſign is well enough underſtood. A Zeal for extirpating Hereſie, and the advancement of the Kings Glory is all that we hear given out for warranting thoſe ſeverities, which lie ſo heavy on ſuch great numbers of the beſt Subjects that *France* has.

The Intereſt that ſome of that Aſſembly, the *Preſident* in particular, has in the management of the affairs that concern the Spirituality, and the high Panegyricks which that body both offer to the King, and give of him for his proceedings in that affair, ſhew that as ſome of them ſet them on, ſo the reſt approve of them: So that upon the whole matter, all the hard uſage the poor Proteſtants meet with, lies at their door.

It is hard to perſwade the World that they can have ſuch *Bowels*, while they thus tear thoſe they call their *Little Children* with their *Paws:* Suppoſe their Children were miſtaken, and in Er-

Errours, yet they ſhould be *Fathers* ſtill, and not ſtarve them to death, becauſe they cannot either change their thoughts, or become ſo impious as to joyn in a Worſhip which they think is not only Superſtitious but Idolatrous. Mens opinions are not in their own power, their underſtandings are neceſſary Agents, and are determined by the evidence of things ſet before them: Our wills can indeed engage our underſtandings to make enquiries with more application; they can alſo biaſs us with ſome partiality, for that in which we find our Intereſts; they can likewiſe command our actions, ſo that we may diſguiſe and diſſemble our opinions: But their dominion goes no further. It is not to be doubted but a ſmall part of that hard uſage which thoſe oppreſſed *French-men* have met with, has more than determined them to enquire narrowly into thoſe opinions, which were infuſed in them by their education: And has wrought ſo effectually on them, as to make them wiſh they could be of another mind; but after all, if they ſee nothing but force to work on them, and manifeſtly diſcern the weakneſs of thoſe Reaſons that

are offered for their Conviction, what remains but that either they muſt do violence to themſelves, and ſo joyn in that monſtrous Idolatry of a worſhipping as a God, that which they believe to be only a piece of Bread; or that they muſt ſtill groan under thoſe miſeries to which they ſee themſelves condemned; which muſt needs poſſeſs them with ſuch an opinion of the Cruelty of thoſe that call themſelves their *Fathers*, that all the tender expreſſions they read in this Letter cannot root it out: For Deeds are much ſurer evidences of mens affections than Words. The Title of a Father agrees ill with the Rage of an Enemy.

The Members of this Aſſembly pretend they go in the traces of thoſe who firſt brought the Chriſtian Religion into *France*; and that they hold the ſame Faith, as well as they poſſeſs the ſame Chairs. It were to be wiſhed, that they were alſo acted with the ſame Spirit of meekneſs and gentleneſs towards thoſe who differ from them, and that they had the ſame averſion to Cruelty that we find among the Ancients. I ſhall not here alledge what *Tertullian* and *Cyprian* have ſaid in general againſt Cruelty

Cruelty on the account of Religion, nor what *Lactantius* has more copiouſly enlarged on. But ſince they mention thoſe that firſt eſtabliſhed the Chriſtian Religion in *France*, I ſhall offer to them what the firſt of the *Gallican* Biſhops (who had an occaſion given him to write of ſuch matters, *Hilary* of *Poictiers*) ſaid againſt the *Arians*, who were perſecuting the Orthodox under *Conſtantius*; though their greateſt ſeverities were not equal to thoſe that the Proteſtants are now made to ſuffer. It will be unreaſonable to alledge that what *Hilary* ſaid againſt that Perſecution cannot quadrate with the preſent caſe, the one being done by an Heretical Emperour, and the other by a *Moſt Chriſtian King*. I ſhall avoid the making any odious compariſon in this matter; but this muſt be acknowledged, that it is to beg the queſtion to ſay, the one perſecuted to advance an errour, whereas the other does it to ſuppreſs errour; and it will appear that he wrote not ſincerely, if he did not condemn that way of proceeding in what cauſe ſoever it were employed: For he plainly ſays, the Biſhops would have oppoſed ſuch methods even to advance

vance Truth. * *Hilary* addreſſed himſelf to *Conſtantius*, that he would ſlacken his ſeverities, and "Suffer the people "to hear thoſe Preach, and celebrate "the Holy myſteries, and pray for his "ſafety and ſucceſs, whom they liked "beſt, and eſteemed moſt, and had "made choice of; then he promiſes that "all things would be quiet, and that not "only there would be no Sedition, but "not ſo much as any murmuring. And as a reaſon for enforcing this, he ſays a little after; "God has taught, "but not impoſed on us the knowledge "of himſelf, and conciliated authority "to his Commands by the Miracles "that were wrought; but he deſpiſes "that Confeſſion that flows from a "compelled mind. If ſuch force were "uſed to draw men to the true Faith, "the Epiſcopal Doctrine would interpoſe and ſay *The Earth is the Lords*, "and he needs not an enforced Obedience, nor does he require a conſtrained Confeſſion. He is not to be deceived, but his favour is to be deſired, "and he is to be worſhipped for our "cauſe, not for his own. I could not "receive any but ſuch as were willing, "nor hear ſuch as did not entreat me,

"nor

* Ad *Conſt.* Permittat lenitas tua populis ut quos voluerint, quos putaverint, quos elegerint, audiant docentes, & divina myſteriorum ſolennia concelebrent & pro incolumitate & beatitudine tua offerant preces. Non quiſquam perverſus aut invidus maligna loquatur. Nulla quidem ſuſpicio erit non modo Seditionis, ſed nec aſperæ murmurationis. ——Deus cognitionem ſui docuit potius quam exegit, & operationum cœleſtium admiratione præceptis ſuis concilians authoritatem,

"nor confirm such as did not profess "(the Faith.) To this he adds, "But "what is this that Priests are forced "by Chains to fear God, and com- "manded by the terrour of punish- "ments? That Priests are kept in Pri- "sons, and the people are delivered "over to the Jaylors? And upon this he runs out more largely than is necessa- ry to transcribe.

coactam confitendi se aspernatus est, voluntatem. Si ad fidem veram istiusmodi vis adhiberetur, Episcopalis Doctrina obviam pergeret, dicerétque, Deus universitatis est, obsequio non eget necessario, non requirit coactam confessionem. Non fallendus est sed promerendus; nostrâ potius non sua causa venerandus est. Non possum nisi volentem recipere, nisi orantem audire, nisi profitentem signare. ——— At vero quid istud quod Sacerdotes timere Deum vinculis cogantur, pœnis jubentur; Sacerdotes Carceribus continentur, plebs in custodiam catenati ordinis disponitur?

But let us also hear how he addresses himself to those Bishops that were the chief Procurers and Instruments of all the sufferings of the Orthodox: And indeed, what he says to them does serve as so apposite an Answer to a great part of this Letter, that I hope it will not be irksome to translate a large quotation out of it. "The name of Peace "(saith he) is specious, and the opinion "of Unity is beautiful: But it is past "all doubt, that that Peace only which "is the Peace of Christ is the Peace of "the Church and the Gospels: We "have desired to recover that same "Peace

Idem contra Arianos in principio. Speciosum quidem nomen est pacis, & pulchra est opinio unitatis; sed quis ambigat eam solam ec-

cleſiæ atque Evangeliorum unicam pacem eſſe, quæ Chriſti eſt? Quam ad Apoſtolos poſt paſſionis ſuæ gloriam eſt locutus, quam ad mandati ſui æterni pignus abiturus commendavit. Hanc nos, fratres dilectiſſimi, ut amiſſam quærere & turbatam componere & repertam tenere curavimus. Sed hujus ipſius fieri nos vel participes vel authores nec temporis noſtri peccata meruerunt, nec imminentis Antichriſti prævii, miniſtrique ſunt paſſi: Qui pace ſuâ, id eſt Impietatis ſuæ unitate ſe jactant, agentes ſe non ut Chriſti Epiſcopos ſed ut Antichriſti

"Peace that is now loſt, of which he "ſpake to his Apoſtles after his glori- "ous ſufferings, and which he being to "leave them, recommended to them "as a pledge of his Eternal Laws. "And we have deſired to compoſe the "diſorders now made in it, and having "again recovered it, we have alſo deſi- "red to maintain it. But ſo prevalent "have the ſins of this age been, and the "fore-runners and Miniſters of Anti- "chriſt that is approaching, have been ſo "active, that we could neither procure "this Peace, nor partake of it: While "thoſe who boaſt of the Unity of their "Peace, that is, of their impiety, behave "themſelves not like the Biſhops of "Chriſt, but like the Prieſts of Antichriſt. "But that we may not be blamed for "uſing reproachful words, we will not "conceal the cauſe of this common ruine, "that ſo none may be ignorant of it. "We know from what S. *John* the Apo- "ſtle has delivered, that there are ma- "ny Antichriſts, and whoſoever denies "Chriſt, as he was preached by the "Apoſtles, is an Antichriſt. It is the "property of Antichriſt, marked by "the very name, to be contrary to "Chriſt. Now by the opinion of a mi- "ſtaken Piety, and under the pretence

"of

"of preaching the Goſpel, this is effect-
"ed or endeavoured, that the Lord Je-
"ſus Chriſt while he ſeems to be
"Preached, is denied. In the firſt
"place, we muſt pity the labour of this
"age, and lament the fooliſh opinions
"of thoſe times, in which God is
"thought to be protected by Men, and
"by Secular ambition the Church of
"Chriſt is laboured to be defended. I
"pray you, O you Biſhops, who be-
"lieve your ſelves to be ſuch, what
"were the aſſiſtances which the Apo-
"ſtles made uſe of in preaching the
"Goſpel? By what Earthly powers
"were they ſupported when they
"preached Chriſt, and converted al-
"moſt all Nations from Idols to
"God? Did they derive any authority
"from the Palace, when they were
"ſinging Hymns to God, in Priſon,
"in Chains, and after they were whip-
"ped? Did *Paul* gather a Church to
"Chriſt by vertue of Royal Edicts,
"when he himſelf was expoſed as a
"ſpectacle on a Theatre? Did he ſe-
"cure himſelf by the protection of a
"*Nero*, a *Veſpaſian* or a *Decius*, by whoſe
"hatred of us the Confeſſion of that
"Divine Preaching did flouriſh? They
"maintaining themſelves by their own
"handy-

Sacerdotes. Ac ne maledicis verborum in eos uti convitiis arguamur, cauſam perditionis publicæ ne cuiquam ignorata ſit, non tacemus. Antichriſtos plures etiam Apoſtolo Joanne prædicante cognovimus. Quiſquis enim Chriſtum qualis ab Apoſtolis eſt prædicatus, negavit, Antichriſtus eſt. nominis Antichriſti proprietas eſt. Chriſto eſſe contrarium. Hoc nunc ſub opinione falſæ pietatis efficitur, hoc ſub ſpecie prædicationis Evangelicæ laboratur, ut dominus Jeſus Chriſtus dum prædicari creditur denegetur. Ac primum miſereri licet

roſtræ ætatis laborem, & præſentium temporum ſtultas opiniones congeriſcere, quibus patrocinari Deo humana creduntur, & ad tuendam Chriſti Eccleſiam ambitione ſeculari laboratur. Oro vos Epiſcopi qui hoc vos eſſe creditis, quibuſnam ſuffragiis ad prædicandum Evangelium Apoſtoli uſi ſunt? Quibus adjuti poteſtatibus Chriſtum prædicaverunt, genteſque fere omnes ex Idolis ad Deum tranſtulerunt? Anne aliquam ſibi aſſumebant è Palatio dignitatem, hymnum Deo in carcere inter catenas & poſt flagella cantantes? Edictiſque Regiis

"handy-work, and aſſembling in upper "rooms and ſecret places, went over all "Countries, both Villages and ſtrong "places, through Sea and Land, not-"withſtanding the Decrees of Senates "and Royal Edicts againſt them. And I "ſuppoſe it will not be denied, that "they had the Keys of the Kingdom of "Heaven. Did not the Divine power "exert it ſelf manifeſtly againſt the ha-"tred of men, when Chriſt was preach-"ed ſo much the more as the preaching "of him was prohibited? But now, "alas, humane aids are employed to "recommend our Divine Faith, and "Chriſt is accuſed as having loſt his "former power, while his name is "promoted by ambition. The Church "now terrifies others by baniſhments "and impriſonments: *She* depends on "the favour of her Communicants, who "was conſecrated by the terrour of her "Perſecutors. *She* baniſhes Prieſts who "was propagated by the baniſhment "of her own Prieſts: and now boaſts "that ſhe is beloved of the World, "who yet could never have been "Chriſts, if the World had not hated "her. The preſent ſtate of affairs, "which is in all mens Eyes and Diſ-"courſes, gives us this parallel of the

"con-

"condition of the Church, as it was "anciently conveyed down to us, and as "it is now ruined in our days.

Paulus cum in theatro ſpectaculum ipſe eſſet Chriſto Ecclesiam congregabat? Nerone ſe credo aut Veſpaſiano aut Decio patrocinantibus tuebatur, quorum in nos odiis confeſſio divinæ predicationis efloruit? Illi manu atque opere ſe alentes, intra cœnacula ſecretaque coeuntes, vicos & caſtella gentesque fere omnes terra ac mari contra Senatus conſulta & Regum Edicta peragrantes. Claves credo regni Cœlorum non habebant? Aut non manifeſta tum Dei virtus contra odia humana porrexit, cum tanto magis Chriſtus prædicaretur, quanto magis prædicari inhiberetur? At nunc, proh dolor! Divinam fidem ſuffragia terrena commendant, inopſque virtutis ſuæ Chriſtus, dum ambitio nomini ſuo conciliatur, arguitur. Terret exiliis & carceribus Eccleſia, credique ſibi cogit, quæ exiliis & carceribus eſt credita: pendet à dignatione communicandum, quæ perſequentium eſt conſecrata terrori. Fugat Sacerdotes quæ fugatis eſt Sacerdotibus propagata: diligi ſe gloriatur à mundo, quæ Chriſti eſſe non potuit niſi eam mundus odiſſet. Hæc de comparatione traditæ nobis olim Eccleſiæ, nunc quam deperditæ, res ipſa quæ in oculis omnium eſt atque ore, clamavit.

There needs no application of theſe words to the preſent purpoſe, they expreſs the Plea of thoſe perſecuted men ſo fully, that it may be well concluded that the Spirit that acted in *Hilary*, is not the ſame with that which now inſpires the Reverend Prelates of that Church. To this I might add the known Hiſtory of the *Priſcillianiſts* that fell out not long after. I ſhall not preſume to make a parallel between any of the *Gallican* Church, and *Ithacius*, who perſecuted them; of whom the Hiſtorian gives this Character, That he was a *vain*, *ſumptuous*, *ſenſual* and *impudent*

Sulp. Sev. l. 2. Sacr. Hiſt. & Dial. 2. de vita Martini.

pudent man, and that he grew to that pitch in vice, that he ſuſpected all men that led ſtrict lives, as if they had been inclined to Hereſie. And it is alſo to be hoped, that none will be ſo uncharitable as to compare the *Priſcillianiſts* with thoſe they now call Hereticks in *France*; whether we conſider their opinions, that were a revival of the blaſphemies of the *Gnoſticks*, or their morals, that were brutal and obſcene, even by *Priſcillian*'s own confeſſion. Now *Ithacius* profecuted thoſe in the Emperours Courts, and went on in the purſuit, though the great Apoſtle of that age, *Martin*, warned him often to give it over. In concluſion, when *Ithacius* had ſet it on ſo far that a Sentence was ſure to paſs againſt them, he then withdrew from it: Sentence was given, and ſome of them were put to death, upon which ſome Biſhops excommunicated *Ithacius*, yet S. *Martin* was wrought on to communicate with him very much againſt his mind; being threatned by the Emperour *Maximus* that if he would not do it, Troops ſhould be ordered to march into *Spain*, to deſtroy the reſt of them. This prevailed on that good man to joyn in Communion with thoſe that had acted ſo contrary

to

to the mercifulneſs of their Religion, and to the ſacredneſs of their Character.

But no Arts could work on S. *Martin* to approve of what they had done. The effects of this were remarkable, for when S. *Martin* went home, if we will believe *Sulpitius*, an Angel appeared to him, and reproved him ſeverely for what he had done; upon which he with many tears, lamented much the ſin he had committed by his communicating with thoſe men, and would never after that communicate with any of that party: And during the ſixteen years that he ſurvived that, *Sulpitius* who lived with him, tells us that he never went to any Synod, and that there was a great withdrawing of thoſe Influences and Graces, for which he had been ſo eminent formerly.

And thus if S. *Martin*'s example and practice is of any authority, the Cruelty of that Church that has engaged all the Princes of *Europe*, as much as was in their power, to do what *Maximus* then did, and the preſent practices of the Biſhops about the Court, might juſtifie a Separation from them. But we do not proceed upon ſuch diſputable grounds.

To this I ſhall only add the authority of another Father, who though he was none of the *Gallican* Biſhops, yet ſince he is more read and eſteemed in that Church than any other of all the Fathers, it is to be hoped that his authority may be ſomewhat conſidered. It is S. *Auſtin.* He was once againſt all ſorts of ſeverity in matters of Religion, and delivered his mind ſo pathetically and elegantly on that ſubject, that I preſume the Reader will not be ill pleaſed to hear his own words, writing againſt the *Manicheans*, whoſe impieties are too well known to be enlarged on; ſo as to ſhew that even in the account which the Church of *Rome* makes of things, they cannot pretend that the Proteſtants are as bad as they were. He begins his Book againſt them with an earneſt Prayer to God that he would give him a calm and ſerene mind, ſo that he might ſtudy their converſion, and not ſeek their ruine; to which purpoſe he applies thoſe words of S. *Paul* to *Timothy*, *the Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be meek towards all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs inſtructing them that oppoſe themſelves:* To which he adds theſe words, "Let them "exerciſe Cruelty upon you, who do "not

Illi in vos ſæviant qui neſciunt quo

"not know with what difficulty truth "is found out, and how hardly er-"rours are avoided: Let them exerciſe "Cruelty upon you, who do not know "how rare and hard a thing it is to "overmaſter carnal imaginations with "the ſerenity of a pious mind. Let "them exerciſe Cruelty upon you, who "do not know with what difficulty the "eye of the inward man is healed, that "ſo it may behold its Sun. Let them "exerciſe Cruelty upon you, who do "not know with what groans and ſighs "we attain the ſmalleſt meaſure of "the knowledge of God. And in the "laſt place, let them exerciſe Cruelty "upon you, who were never them-"ſelves deceived with any errour like "that with which you are now de-"ceived.

cùm labore verum inveniatur, & quam difficilè caveantur errores. Illi in vos ſæviant qui neſciunt quam rarum & arduum ſit carnalia phantaſmata piæ mentis ſerenitate ſuperare. Illi in vos ſæviant qui neſciunt cum quanta difficultate ſanetur oculus interioris hominis ut poſſit intueri ſolem ſuum. Illi in vos ſæviant qui neſciunt quibus ſuſpiriis & gemitibus fiat ut ex quantulacunque parte poſſit intelligi Deus. Poſtremo, illi in vos ſæviant qui nullo tali errore decepti ſunt, quali vos deceptos vident. *Contra Epiſt. Fund. cap.* 1, & 2.

It is true, it may be pretended, that he became afterwards of another mind, but that will not ſerve to excuſe the ſeverities now on foot, the caſe being ſo very different. The *Donatiſts* in his time very generally fierce and cruel, one ſort of them, the *Circumcellioniſts*, acted like

mad men: They did lie in wait for S. *Auſtin*'s life; they fell upon ſeveral Biſhops with great barbarity, putting out the eyes of ſome, and cudgelling others till they left them as dead. Upon this, the Biſhops of *Africk* were forced to deſire the Emperours protection, and that the Laws made againſt Hereticks might be executed upon the *Donatiſts*, and yet even in this S. *Auſtin* was at firſt averſe. It is true, he afterwards in his Writings againſt the *Donatiſts* juſtified thoſe ſeverities of fining and baniſhing, but he expreſſes both in his own name, and in the name of all thoſe Churches, great diſlike not only of all Capital proceedings, but of all rigour; and when the Governours and Magiſtrates were carrying things too far, he interpoſed often and with great earneſtneſs to moderate their ſeverity: and wrote to them, that if they went on with ſuch rigour, the Biſhops would rather bear with all the violences of the *Donatiſts*, than ſeek to them for redreſs; and whole Synods of Biſhops concurred with him in making the like Addreſſes in their favours; And though there were exceſſes committed in ſome few inſtances, yet we may eaſily conclude how gentle they were, upon

Ep. 48. & ep. 50.

Lib. 3. *cont. Petil. c.* 47. & 50.

Ep. 60, 127, 158, 160.

upon the whole matter, from this that he ſays that the Fines impoſed by Law had never been exacted, and that they were ſo far from turning the *Donatiſts* out of their own Churches, that they ſtill kept poſſeſſion of ſeveral Churches which they had violently invaded, and wreſted out of the hands of the Biſhops. It is plain then, ſince he juſtified thoſe ſeverities only as a neceſſary reſtraint on the rage to the *Donatiſts*, and a juſt protection of the Biſhops, that this has no relation to the hardſhips the Proteſtants now ſuffer, it not being pretended that they have drawn it upon themſelves by any tumultuary or irregular proceedings of theirs.

Lib. cont. Don

Lib. 1. cont. Parm. cap. 7

So much ſeemed neceſſary to ſhew how different the Spirit of the preſent Clergy of *France* is from that which animated the Church in the former and beſt ages.

The Reverend Prelates ſay in their Letter, *That they hold the ſame Faith with their Predeceſſors.* If this were true in all points, it were indeed very hard to write an Apology for thoſe that have ſeparated from them: I ſhall not engage in a long diſcuſſion of the ſentiments of the Ancient Biſhops of the *Gallican* Church; yet that the Reader

may not be too much wrought on by the confidence and plauſibleneſs of this expreſſion, I ſhall only give a taſte of the Faith of the firſt of all the *Gallican* Clergy, whoſe works are yet preſerved, and that is *Irenæus*: I ſhall inſtance it in two particulars, the one is the hinge upon which all our other Controverſies turn; that is, whether the *Scriptures* or *Oral Tradition* is to be appealed to, for determining matters of Controverſie: The other is the moſt material point in difference among us, concerning the preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament, whether in it we really receive the ſubſtance of Bread and Wine, or only the Accidents. As to the firſt, he directly appeals to the Scriptures, which he ſays were the *Pillar and ground of Truth*; and adds, that the *Valentinians* did appeal to Oral Tradition, from which he turns to that Tradition that was come from the Apoſtles; on which he inſiſts very copiouſly, and puts all the authority of Tradition in this, That it was derived from the Apoſtles: And therefore ſays that if the Apoſtles had delivered nothing in Writing, we muſt then have followed the Order of Tradition: And after he has ſhewed that the Tradition to which the *Valentinians* pretend-

Contra Hæreſ. lib. 3. cap. 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5.

pretended was really againſt them, and that the Orthodox had it derived down from the Apoſtles on their ſide, he returns to that upon which he had ſet up the ſtrength of his cauſe, to prove the truth from the Scriptures. Now the Scriptures being the foundation on which the Proteſtants build, and Oral Tradition, together with the authority of the Church, being that on which the Church of *Rome* builds, it will be eaſie to every one that conſiders thoſe Chapters referred to in *Irenæus*, to gather upon which of thoſe he grounded his belief.

As for the other particular, he plainly calls the Sacrament *that Bread over which thanks have been given*; and ſays, *our fleſh is nouriſhed by the body and blood of Chriſt*; and concludes that *our fleſh by the Sacrament has an aſſurance of its Reſurrection and Incorruptibility*. More particularly he ſays, *Our blood is encreaſed by the blood of Chriſt, and that he encreaſes our body by that bread which he has confirmed to be his body, and that by theſe the ſubſtance of our body is encreaſed*; and from thence he argues, that *our bodies receive an encreaſe not by any internal or inviſible way, but in the natural way of nouriſhment*; and ſo concludes, that *our*

lib. 4. cap. 34. & lib. 5. cap. 2.

bodies being nouriſhed by the Euchariſt, ſhall therefore riſe again. Every one that conſiders the force of theſe words, muſt conclude that he believed our bodies received in the Sacrament a real ſubſtance which nouriſhed them, and not bare Accidents. If then upon this eſſay it appears, that the firſt Writer of all *Gallican* Biſhops does agree with the Proteſtants, both in that which is the foundation upon which they build their whole cauſe, and alſo in that particular opinion which is believed to be of the greateſt importance, then the Reader has no reaſon to believe that the preſent Biſhops of *France* hold the ſame Faith which their Predeceſſors taught who firſt preached the Chriſtian Religion in that Kingdom.

But now I come to anſwer the main Queſtion, which is indeed the whole ſubſtance of the Letter, *Why have they made the Schiſm?* If ſuch a Letter with ſuch a demand in it, had come from the *Abaſſin* or *Armenian* Churches, or perhaps from the *Greek* Churches, whoſe diſtance from us is ſuch, and the oppreſſions they groan under are ſo extreme, that they have little heart and few opportunities to enquire into the affairs or opinions of others, it could not

not have been thought ſtrange; but to hear it from theſe: among whom thoſe live, who have ſo often both in Writings and Diſcourſes anſwered this queſtion ſo copiouſly, is really ſomewhat unaccountable: Yet this is not all, but it is added, *That the Proteſtants, upon trial finding they could not ſhake their Doctrine, have charged them only for their ill lives, as if that were the ground of the Separation.* This it muſt be confeſſed, had better become the affected Eloquence of a *Maimbourg*, than the ſincerity of ſo many eminent men; of whom the mildeſt cenſure that can be paſt in this particular is, That ſome aſpiring Prieſt being appointed to pen this Letter, that was better accuſtomed to the figures of a clamorous Rhetorick, than the ſtrict meaſures of Truth, gave it this turn, hoping to recommend himſelf by it, and that the Biſhops ſigned it in haſte, without conſidering it well. Who of all the Proteſtants have made that Experiment, and found that the Faith of the Church of *Rome* was not to be attackt, and that ſhe can only be accuſed for the ill lives of ſome in her Communion? If this were all we had to object, we do not deny but that all that the Fathers retorted on the Schiſmaticks,

maticks, particularly the *Donatiſts*, did very juſtly fall on us; and that we could neither anſwer it to God, to the World, nor our own Conſciences, if we had ſeparated from their Church on no other account: And this is indeed ſo weak a Plea, that the Penner of the Letter ſhewed his skill at leaſt, if he was wanting in his ſincerity, to ſet up a pretence which he knew he could eaſily overthrow, though the reaſons he brings to overthrow it, are not all pertinent nor convincing: But this in concluſion, is ſo managed as to draw an occaſion from it to complement the preſent Pope, ſome way to make an amends for their taking part with their King againſt him. All that is to be ſaid on this Head is, That Proteſtants are not ſo unjuſt as to deny the Pope that now reigns, his due praiſes; of whoſe vertue and ſtrictneſs of life they hear ſuch accounts, that they heartily wiſh all the Aſſembly of the Clergy, from the Preſident, down to the Secretaries would imitate that excellent Pattern that he ſets them. A Zeal for converting Hereticks does not very well become thoſe whoſe courſe of life has not been ſo exemplary, that this can be imputed to an inward ſenſe of Religi-

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on, and to the motives of Divine Charity. But in this point of the corruption of mens lives, we may add two things more material: The one is if a Church teaches ill Morals, or at leaſt connives at ſuch Caſuiſtical Doctrines as muſt certainly root out all the principles of moral vertue and common goodneſs out of the minds of men, then their ill Morals may be improved to be a good argument for a Separation from them. How much the Caſuiſtical Doctrine of thoſe who are the Chief Confeſſors in that Communion has been corrupted of late, we may learn from what has been publiſhed by many among themſelves, particularly by their late Addreſs to the preſent Pope, and by the Articles condemned both by Pope *Alexander* the Seventh, and by the Pope that now reigns. But yet how faint thoſe cenſures are, every one that has read them, muſt needs obſerve. This is not all: The diſſolving of Oaths and Vows, the diſpenſing with many of the Laws of God, the authorizing Subjects to ſhake off their Princes yoke, if he does not extirpate Hereſie and Hereticks, the butcheries of thoſe they call Hereticks, and that after Faith given to the contrary; having

ving been for ſome Ages the publick practices of the Court of *Rome*; in which ſeveral General Councils have alſo concurred with them, are things both of ſuch a nature, and have been ſo openly avowed as well as practiſed in that Church, that this argument from the corruption of their Morals, may be well faſtened on their whole Church. If likewiſe many opinions are received among them, which do naturally tend to ſlacken the ſtrictneſs of holineſs, and give the World more mild Ideas of ſin, and make the way to the favour of God acceſſible even without a real Reformation, then there will be more weight in this argument than may at firſt view appear. The belief of the Sacraments conferring Grace, *ex opere operato*, the Vertue of Indulgences, the Prieſtly Abſolution, the Communication of Merits, the Vertue ſuppoſed to be in ſome Pilgrimages, in Images and Priviledged Altars, in Fraternities, and many conſecrated things, together with the after-game of Purgatory, and of Redemption out of it by Maſſes; theſe with many more devices, are ſuch contrivances for enervating the true force of Religion, and have ſuch effects on the lives of men, who generally are too

too eaſie to hearken to any thing that may make them hope well, while they live ill; that when we complain of a great diſſolution of mens Morals that live under the influences of that Religion, this charge is not perſonal, but falls on their Church in common.

In the next place, that vaſt corruption of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, and of all the Primitive Rules, occaſioned chiefly by the exorbitant power the Popes have aſſumed, of diſpenſing with all Laws, the groſs ſale of ſuch Graces at *Rome*, the Intrigues in the Creation of the Popes themſelves, the univerſal neglect of the Paſtoral care among the ſuperiour Orders of the Clergy, do give men juſt and deep prejudices againſt a Church ſo corrupt in her ruling Members, and do raiſe great diſlike of that extent of Authority which the Biſhops of *Rome* have aſſumed, that have cut all the Banks, and let in ſuch an inundation of ill practices on the World. And if once in an Age or two a Pope of another temper, of better Morals, and greater ſtrictneſs ariſes, we are notwithſtanding that, to judge of things not upon rare and ſingle inſtances, but upon their more ordinary

and

and natural effects. Thus laying all theſe things together, it will appear that our exceptions to that Church upon the account of their Morals, is not ſo ſlight as the Penner of that Letter has repreſented it; and that his Inſtances for living among ill men have no relation to this matter.

But this is the weakeſt Plea we have for our Separation, and as ſtrong ſoever as it may be in it ſelf, we build upon ſolider foundations.

In order to the opening this, I ſhall premiſe a little of the true end and deſign of Religion, which is to beget in us ſo deep a ſenſe of the Divine nature and perfections as may moſt effectually engage us to become truly Holy. There are two Inclinations in the nature of men, that diſpoſe him to corrupt the Ideas of God; the one is an Inclination to cloath him in ſome outward figure, and preſent him to our ſenſes in ſuch a manner, that we may hope by flatteries or ſubmiſſions, by pompous or cruel ſervices to appeaſe him: And the other is a deſire to reconcile our notions of Religion to our vicious habits and appetites, that ſo we may ſome way pacifie our Conſciences in the midſt of our luſts and paſſions: And thus the

true

true notion of Idolatry is the repreſenting of God to us ſo as that we may hope to gain his favour by other methods than our being inwardly pure and holy: And the immorality of this conſiſts not only in the indecency of ſuch repreſentations, and their unſuitableneſs to the Divine nature, but likewiſe in this, that our notions of God which ought to be the ſeeds of Vertue and true Godlineſs, by which our natures are to be reformed, are no more effectual that way, but turn only to a Pageantry, and ſpend themſelves in dreſſing up our worſhip, ſo as we think will better agree with one that is like our ſelves: Now we find the chief deſign of the Goſpel was to root this out of the World, and to give us the higheſt and perfecteſt Ideas of the purity and goodneſs of the Divine nature, that might raiſe in us that inward probity of Soul, comprehended in the general name of *Charity* or *Love,* which is the proper Character of the Chriſtian Spirit: We have alſo the Divine Holineſs ſo preſented to us, that we can never hope to attain the favour of God here, or Eternal happineſs hereafter, but by becoming inwardly and univerſally holy. Now our main charge againſt the Church

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of *Rome* is, That this which is the great deſign of the Chriſtian Religion is reverſed among them, and that chiefly in four things.

1. In propoſing viſible objects to the adorations of the people, againſt not only the current of the whole Scriptures, but the true Idea and right notion of God; and this not only by Precept in the Images of our Saviour and the Saints, but by a general tolerance in the Images of the bleſſed Trinity it ſelf. Thus the ſenſes having ſomewhat ſet before them on which they may work, do naturally corrupt the mind, and convert Religion, which is an inward and ſpiritual work, into an outward groſs homage to theſe objects.

2. In ſetting up the Interceſſion of Saints, as if either God had not a capacity of attending to the whole Government of the World, or were not ſo merciful or good, but that as Princes are wrought on by the interpoſition of their Courtiers, ſo he needed to have ſuch importunities to induce him to be favourable to us: The very Plea commonly uſed for this from the reſemblance of Earthly Courts, is the greateſt debaſing of the Divine Nature that is poſſible: And when the Addreſſes made

to theſe Saints in the publick Offices of the Church, are the very ſame that we make to God or our Saviour, *That they would pardon our ſins, give us grace, aſſiſt us at all times, and open the Kingdome of Heaven to us*; and when after thoſe things have been complained of for above an Age, and that upon a general review of their Offices, they are ſtill continued among them, we muſt conclude that the honour due to the Creator is offered to the Creature. I need not bring Inſtances of theſe, they are ſo well known.

3. In t The many Conſecrations that are uſed among them of *Images*, *Croſſes*, *Habits*, *Water*, *Salt*, *Oyl*, *Candles*, *Bells*, *Veſſels*, *Agnus Dei's*, and *Grains*; with a vaſt deal more, by which thoſe things are ſo conſecrated, as to have a vertue in them for driving away Devils, for being a ſecurity both to Soul and Body, and a remedy againſt all Temporal and Spiritual evils. This way of Incantations was one of the groſſeſt pieces of Heatheniſm, and is now by them brought into the Chriſtian Religion: And the opinion, that upon theſe Conſecrations a Vertue is conveyed to thoſe things, is infuſed into the people by their authorized offices: In which if

in any thing it is not to be believed that the Church lies and deceives her Children: This is plainly to consider God as the Heathens did their Idols, and to fetch down Divine Vertues by charms, as they did. And

4. Their worshipping with Divine Honour, that which by all the Indications that we can have of things, we know is no other than what it appears to be, even *Bread* and *Wine* in its substance and nature: Thus Divine Adoration is offered to those Elements, contrary to the universal practice of the Christian Church for 1200 years; and this passes among them as the most important piece of their Worship, which has almost swallowed up all the rest. Thus the true Ideas of God, and the chief design of the Christian Religion is overthrown in that Communion; and what can we think of a Church that in the most important of her Offices, adds this Prayer to the absolution of Sinners, *The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the blessed Virgin, and all the Saints, and whatever good thou hast done, and whatever evil thou hast suffered be to thee for the pardon of sin, the increase of Grace, and the reward of eternal life*; where we see clearly what

what things they joyn in the ſame breath, and in order to the ſame ends with the paſſion of Chriſt. When they have cleanſed their Churches of theſe objects of Idolatry and Superſtition, and their Offices of thoſe Impious Addreſſes to Saints, and that infinite number of Enchantments, then they may upon ſome more advantage ask, *Why have we made the Schiſm?* It is becauſe they have corrupted the Doctrine of Chriſt and the Goſpel; and if thoſe things upon which the Separation ſubſiſts were removed, it could no more ſubſiſt than Accidents can do without a Subject.

The next thing upon which we ground our Separation is, That not only the Church of *Rome* would hearken to no Addreſſes nor Remonſtrances that were made to her for reforming thoſe abuſes, but that by Anathema's and the higheſt cenſures poſſible, all are obliged to believe as ſhe believes in thoſe very particulars, and are bound to joyn in a Worſhip in which thoſe things which we condemn, are made indiſpenſable parts of our publick Devotions: So that we muſt either mock God, by concurring in a Worſhip which we believe Impious and Superſtitious, or

we muſt ſeparate from them. None can be admitted to Benefices of Cure or preferment, without ſwearing moſt of theſe Opinions which we think are falſe: Nor can any Eminent Heretick be received among them, without ſwearing that he in all things receives the Doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, and that he thinks all that do not receive them worthy of an Anathema. If the Errours of the Church of *Rome* had been only ſpeculative opinions, or things of leſs moment, we could have better born with them, or if they had only held to their own cuſtomes without impoſing them on us, we could have held in ſeveral things a ſiſterly Communion with them, as we do with the *Greek* Churches; but when they have not only brought in and obſtinately maintained thoſe corruptions, but have ſo Tyrannically impoſed them on the World, it is ſomewhat ſtrange to ſee men make ſuch grimaces, and an appearance of ſerioufneſs, while they ask this queſtion, of which they know ſo well how to have reſolved themſelves.

One thing is likewiſe to be conſidered, that in the examination of the corruptions of that Communion, it is not ſufficient

ent to ſay ſomewhat to ſweeten every one of them in particular, but it is the complication of all together that we chiefly inſiſt on, ſince by all theſe ſet together we have another view of them, than by every one of them taken aſunder.

This then is our anſwer to the queſtion ſo often repeated: We have not made the Schiſm from the Church of Chriſt, as it was ſetled by the Apoſtles, and continued for many ages after them, but they have departed from that, and have refuſed to return to it. On the contrary, they have condemned and curſed us for doing it: Upon this, all that they object againſt the firſt Reformers, as having been once of their Communion, falls to the ground: For if theſe things which we object to them are true, then ſince no man is bound to continue in Errours, becauſe he was bred up in them, this is no juſt prejudice againſt thoſe men. All the flouriſhes raiſed upon this ground are but ſlight things, and ſavour more of a monaſtick and affectate Eloquence, than of the weight and ſolidity of ſo renowned a Body. What is ſaid of pulling down the Altars, and of that elegant figure of Chriſts being the *Sparrow*, and the Churches being the *Turtle*, that loved

to make their Nests in them, is really very hard to be answered; not for the strength that is in it, but for another reason, that in Reverence to that Assembly I shall not name. The Sacrifice of the death of Christ we acknowledge, as that only by which we come to God, and in a general sense of that term, the commemoration of it may be also called a *Sacrifice*, and the Communion Table an *Altar*, and such we still retain: and for any thing further, either of Altar or Sacrifice, till they give a better authority for it, than a fanciful allusion to an ill-understood Verse of a Psalm, we shall not be much concerned in it.

If Wars and Confusions have followed in some places upon the reforming those abuses, they were the effects of the Rage and Cruelty of those Churchmen, that seemed never like to be satiated with the blood of those that had departed from them. And if the specious pretence of Edicts, Princes of the Blood, the preserving the House of *Bourbon*, the defending *France* from Foreigners, joyning with that natural appetite that is in all men to preserve themselves, engaged some in Wars under the minority of their Kings, it is

nothing

nothing but what is natural to man: and theſe who condemn it moſt, yet ought to pity thoſe whom their Predeceſſors, in whoſe ſteps they now go, conſtrained to do all that they did. And the Rebellions in *England* and *Ireland*, in King *Henry* the Eighth, *Edward* the Sixth, and Queen *Elizabeth*'s time, when no Perſecutions provoked them to them, and no Laws gave them any colour for them, are a much ſtronger prejudice againſt their Church, chiefly ſince theſe were ſet on by the Authority and Agents of *Rome*, ſo that they may well give over the purſuing this matter any further. As for the argument ſet before them from the Greatneſs and Glory of their King, and his Zeal to have all again re-united into one Body, how powerful ſoever it may be to work upon their fears, and to touch them in their Secular concerns, it cannot be conſidered as an argument to work on their reaſons. They expreſſed their Zeal for their King in his greateſt extremity, while he was under age; and after all the heavy returns that they have met with ſince that time, they have continued in an Invincible Loyalty and ſubmiſſion in all things, except in the matters of their God: If the He-

roick greatneſs, Glorious ſucceſs, and the more inherent qualities of a Princely mind, are good Arguments to work on Subjects, they were as ſtrong in the times of a *Trajan*, a *Decius*, or a *Diocleſian*, to perſwade the Chriſtians to turn Heathens: But it is very probable this is the ſtrongeſt of all thoſe motives that have produced ſo many Converſions of late, while men, either to make their Court, or to live eaſie, are induced to make ſhipwrack of the Faith, and of a good Conſcience. And I ſhall not add, that it ſeems thoſe who are ſo often making uſe of this Argument, feel the mighty force it has on themſelves, and ſo imagine it ſhould prevail as much on others, as they find it does on their own Conſciences, or rather on their Ambition and Covetouſneſs.

I will proſecute the matter of this Letter no further, and therefore ſhall not ſhew in how many places the Secretary that penned it has diſcovered how much he is a Novice in ſuch matters, and what great advantages he gives to thoſe who would ſift all the expreſſions, the figures, and the periods in it. But the Reſpect I pay to thoſe that ſubſcribe it, as well as the

impor-

importance and gravity of the ſubject ſtop me: So from the reviewing this Letter, I go next to conſider the Methods laid down by the Aſſembly for carrying on thoſe Converſions.

A

MEMORIAL,

Containing diverſe Methods, of which very great uſe may be made for the Converſion of thoſe who profeſs the pretended Reformed Religion.

The firſt Method

Is that which Cardinal Richelieu *uſed for reducing, either in the way of Diſpute or Conference, thoſe of the* P. R. R. *and to perſwade them in an amicable manner to re-unite themſelves to the Church.*

THis Method is to attack them by a Decree of a Synod of theirs that met at Charenton, 1631. *by which they received to their Communion thoſe of the* Ausbourg *Confeſſion, who hold the Real Preſence of the Body of Jeſus Chriſt in the*

the Euchariſt, together with diverſe other Articles that are very different from the Confeſſion of Faith of thoſe that are the P. Reformed. Upon which the Miniſter Dailee *in his Apology ſays, That if the Church of* Rome *had no other errour beſides that, they had not had a ſufficient reaſon for their ſeparating from her.*

It is certain, that none of all the other points of our Belief that are controverted, are either of greater importance, or harder to be believed than this which has been ever eſteemed even by themſelves one of the chief grounds of their Separation, and is that by which the people are moſt amuſed. As for that which the Miniſter Dailee *ſays for eluding the force of this Objection, That the* Lutherans *do not adore Jeſus Chriſt in the Sacrament: It is altogether unreaſonable, ſince* Calvin *himſelf reproves the* Lutherans *for that, and is forced to acknowledge that adoration is a neceſſary conſequence of the real Preſence.* What is more ſtrange (*ſays he*) than to put Jeſus Chriſt in the Bread, and not to adore him? and if he is in the Bread, then he ought to be adored under the Bread.

Cal. lib. de vera participatione corporis Chriſti in cœna.

Thus ſince, according to the Calviniſts *in the ſame Synod, one does not overthrow the grounds of Salvation by the belief of the Real Preſence, and the other points of*

their

their Confeſſion concerning which they diſpute, that Cardinal thought he could convince them of their errour, in ſeparating ſaom the Communion of the Church of Rome, *in which, according to their own Maximes, one could be ſaved.*

It was by the like reaſoning that the African *Fathers convinced the* Donatiſts, *called the* Primianiſts, *that they had unjuſtly ſeparated themſelves from the Catholick Church, becauſe it received* Cecilian *into its Communion, ſince they had made a decree of Union with the* Maximianiſts, *whom they had formerly condemned. It was in the Council of* Carthage, *held under* Anaſtaſius, *that the Fathers uſed this againſt thoſe Hereticks, and in the Fourth Canon they ſet this before them,* * *That they might ſee if they would but open their eyes a little to the Divine Light, that they had as unjuſtly cut themſelves off from the unity of the Church; as the* Maximianiſts *according to what they ſaid, had ſeparated themſelves from their Communion.*

*Ubi eis divinitus demonſtratur ſi attendere velint, tam inique illos ab Eccleſiæ unitate præciſos, quam inique clamant Maximianiſtas à ſe Schiſma feciſſe. *Concil. Carth. ſub Anaſt. Can.* 4.

Re-

Remarks.

IF Cardinal *Richelieu* had not been an abler States-man, than as it appears by this argument, he was a Divine, the Princes of *Europe* would not have ſuch cauſe as they have at preſent, to dread the growth of the *French* Monarchy, of which he laid the beſt and ſtrongeſt foundations. It is a common Maxime, That no man can excel but in one thing; ſo ſince his ſtrength lay in the Politicks, no wonder he had no great Talent for Divinity: But if this at firſt view ſeemed to him to have ſomewhat in it to amuſe weak minds, eſpecially when it ſurprized them with its novelty; yet it is a little unexpected to find it taken up by ſo great a Body, and ſet in the front of their Methods for making Proſelytes, after the weakneſs of it has been ſo evidently diſcovered.

1. Great difference is to be made between a ſpeculation that lies in the mind, and is a mans particular opinion, and that which diſcovers it ſelf in the moſt ſolemn acts of Worſhip; for the former, unleſs it is ſuch as ſubverts the foundations of Religion, we can well bear with it: Theſe are errours in

in which the perſon that holds them is only concerned, whereas the other errors become more fruitful, they corrupt the Worſhip, they give ſcandal, and infect others. Therefore we will without ſcruple own, that whether a man believe Conſubſtantiation or Tranſubſtantiation, ſo long as that lies in his brain as a notion, we may conclude him a very ill Philoſopher, and a worſe Divine, for holding it; but ſtill we will receive him to our Communion, that being a ſolemn ſtipulation of the New Covenant made with God through Chriſt: And therefore ſince ſuch a perſon acts nothing contrary to that Covenant, we ought to admit him to it: But Idolatry being contrary to the Laws upon which that Covenant is grounded, we cannot receive an Idolater, though we do admit ſuch as are in errours, that produce no other effect but miſtaken apprehenſions and judgements. It is unreaſonable to ſay that if the Preſence is acknowledged, Adoration ought to follow; for we will excommunicate none for a conſequence, were it never ſo well deduced, ſo long as they hold not that conſequence: And if *Calvin* argued as he did from that abſurdity, it was not that he thought

they

they ought to adore, becauſe they believed Conſubſtantiation; but rather to let them ſee how unreaſonable it was to believe it, ſince they did not adore it; and yet it muſt be confeſſed the argument is not unanſwerable: For it may be ſaid, that as Princes when they are in any place *Incognito*, even though they are known, yet their being *Incognito* ſhews that they will not have that reſpect paid them which is otherwiſe due to them: So that Chriſt being preſent in an inviſible manner is not to be adored. I ſhall not determine whether the Argument or the Anſwer is ſtronger, yet this muſt be confeſſed, that upon ſo dubious a conſequence, it were a very unreaſonable Cruelty to deny the holding Communion with thoſe that believed ſuch a preſence, though we refuſe to communicate with thoſe that joyn Adoration to it.

2. There is a great difference to be made between the receiving men that hold erroneous Tenets, to our Communion that we believe is pure and undefiled, and the joyning our ſelves to a Communion in which we muſt profeſs thoſe very errours which we condemn; and by ſolemn acts of Worſhip muſt teſtifie before God and the World

World that we believe that which inwardly and in our Conſciences we think falſe. The former is only a tolerating or conniving at the errours of others, without any ſort of approbation of them; whereas the other is the fulleſt and moſt publick contradiction to our Conſciences that is poſſible.

3. As long as any Errours do not ſtrike againſt the foundations of the Chriſtian Religion, we own that we will bear with them, at leaſt not oblige others, eſpecially the Laity, in whom there is not that danger of ſpreading them to renounce them, before we admit them to the Sacraments: But the caſe of the Church of *Rome* is very different, among whom this opinion is but one of very many opinions, that we think reverſe the whole nature and deſign of Chriſtianity, of which ſome ſhort hints were given in the Remarks upon the Letter of the Aſſembly General.

4. It is a very ill Inference to conclude, becauſe that we think a man can be ſaved that believes the Corporal Preſence, therefore we have done amiſs to ſeparate from their Communion. We may think men may be ſaved though they are in ſome errours, that in us were

were damnable, after the illumination we have had; eſpecially if we ſhould profeſs that we believe them when we do not believe them, and therefore if we cannot continue in their Communion without profeſſing that we believe thoſe Errours, they were to blame for impoſing them on us, and not we for ſeparating from them, when they had impoſed them.

5. That which the *African* Fathers objected to the *Donatiſts* was very pertinently urged againſt them, who grounded their Separation only upon this, That there were ſome corrupt members in the Communion of the Church: And this was very juſtly caſt back on them, upon their receiving the *Maximianiſts*, whom they had formerly condemned as Schiſmaticks, to their Communion. But it has no relation to us who have not ſeparated from their Church upon any ſuch perſonal account: Therefore ſince the chief grounds of our Separation are the corruptions in their Worſhip, and our being obliged to bear a ſhare in thoſe corruptions, it is clear that our receiving to our Communion thoſe who have not corrupted their Worſhip, and come to joyn with us, has no relation to that diſpute b-

tween the *African* Fathers and the *Donatiſts*.

6. There is one thing in the Method which we freely confeſs to be true, That there is none of the controverted points that are harder to be believed than this of the Real Preſence. It is no wonder it ſhould be ſo, ſince it has the ſtrongeſt Evidences both of Senſe and Reaſon againſt it: But if it is ſo hard to be believed, it is very ſevere to proſecute thoſe who cannot bring themſelves to believe it, in ſo extreme a manner as that Church has done and ſtill does. Upon the whole matter, this Method is ſo weak in all the parts of it, that its being ſet firſt, gives no great hopes of any thing extraordinary to follow.

The

The Second Method

IS to lay this before them, that according to the light of Nature, and their own Confeſſion, in the matters of our Salvation, which is the one thing that is needful, we ought always to chuſe the ſurer ſide: Now it is certain, that according to that Decree of the Synod of Charenton, *it is indifferent to them whether one believes the Real Preſence, or whether they believe it not; and we hold it neceſſary to believe it, therefore it is the ſurer ſide to believe it: and if they could but diſengage themſelves a little from their prejudices, they would follow this way. The ſame may be ſaid of all the other points in diſpute.* Meſtreſat *the Miniſter, in his Treatiſe of the Church, ſays that things neceſſary to Salvation are only thoſe that are ſo expreſsly ſet down in the Scriptures, that no doubt can be made of them. Such as are the Articles of the Apoſtles Creed.* If there is any thing that is obſcure (*ſays he*) then I aſſert it is not neceſſary, and therefore one may be a very good Chriſtian without it, and may have both Faith, Hope and Charity.

It is evident that the points in diſpute which they maintain againſt us are not ſo clearly expreſſed in the Scripture, that one cannot doubt concerning them: Since we maintain on good grounds, that they are not there: So that according to their own Doctrine, one can disbelieve them, without endangering his Salvation. But we ſay that it is neceſſary, under the pain of damnation, to believe the contrary opinion, and therefore if they will take the ſureſt ſide, they ought to ſubmit to us.

Remarks.

1. IT is ſomething odd to ſee ſo great a Body uſe this Logick, That becauſe we think an errour is not damnable, and ſuch as obliges us to excommunicate all that hold it, therefore we think it indifferent to believe it or not. We judge it an errour, and while we think it ſo, it were a lie for us to ſay that we did believe it, and this, eſpecially in ſuch publick Acts of Worſhip of God, which are groſsly Idolatrous, by their own Confeſſion, while we hold this perſuaſion, is ſo far from being a thing indifferent, that we know nothing more damnable: For this were to lie every day to God and

and the World, and to commit Idolatry in a manner more abſurd, than the moſt barbarous Nations have been guilty of, which is to worſhip that as a God which we do believe is only a piece of Bread.

2. In this very Article it is plain that our Opinion is the ſurer ſide: For as to the Spiritual efficacy of the Sacrament and due preparation for it, which is all that we hold concerning it, by their own Confeſſion there can be no ſin in that: whereas if their opinion is falſe, they are guilty of a moſt horrid Idolatry. So there is no danger in any thing we do, whereas there may be great danger on their ſide; all the danger that is poſſible to be on our ſide, is, that we do not adore Chriſt if he is preſent, which may be thought to be want of Reverence: But that cannot be reaſonably urged, ſince we at the ſame time adore him, believing him to be in Heaven; and if this objection againſt us had any force, then the Primitive Church for twelve hundred years muſt have been in a ſtate of damnation, for none of them adored the Conſecrated Elements, nor has the *Greek* Church ever done it.

3. It is clear this general Maxime of taking the ſurer ſide is againſt them.

There is no ſin in not worſhipping Images, whereas there may be a ſin in doing it. They confeſs it is not neceſſary to invocate the Saints, and we believe it is ſinful. They do not hold that it is neceſſary to ſay Maſſes for redeeming Souls out of Purgatory, and we believe that it is an impious profanation of the Sacrament. They do not hold it is neceſſary to take away the Cup in the Sacrament, we think it Sacrilegious. They do not think thoſe Conſecrations, by which Divine Vertues are derived into ſuch a variety of things to be neceſſary, we look on them as groſs Superſtitions. They do not think the Worſhip in an unknown tongue neceſſary, whereas we think it a diſgrace to Religion. So in all theſe, and many more particulars, it is clear that we are of the ſurer ſide.

4. We own that Maxime, That nothing is neceſſary to Salvation but what is plainly ſet down in the Scriptures; but this is not to be carried ſo far, as that it ſhould be impoſſible by ſophiſtry, or the equivocal uſe of words, to faſten ſome other ſenſe to ſuch paſſages in Scripture; for then nothing can be ſaid to be plain in any Book whatſoever: But we underſtand

ſtand this of the genuine meaning of the Scriptures, ſuch as a plain well-diſpoſed man will find out, if his mind is not ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed or biaſſed with falſe and wrong meaſures.

5. The Confidence with which any party propoſes their opinions, cannot be a true Standart to judge of them; otherwiſe the Receipts of Mountebanks will be always preferred to thoſe preſcribed by good Phyſicians; and indeed the modeſty of one ſide and the confidence of the other, ought rather to give us a biaſs for the one againſt the other, eſpecially if it is viſible that Intereſt is very prevalent in the confident party.

The Third Method

IS *to confer amicably with them, and to ſhew them our Articles in the Scriptures and Tradition, as the Fathers of the firſt Ages underſtood both the one and the other, without engaging in reaſonings, or the drawing out of Conſequences by Syllogiſms, as Cardinal* Bellarmin, *and* Perron, *and* Gretſer, *and the other Writers of Controverſie have done; which ordinarily beget endleſs diſputes. It was in this manner that the General Councils did proceed, and thus did S.* Auſtin *prove Original ſin againſt* Julian: To this end (*ſays he*) * O Julian, that I may overthrow thy Engines and Artifices by the opinions of thoſe Biſhops who have interpreted the Scripture with ſo much glory. *After which he cites the paſſages of the Scripture, as they were underſtood by S.* Ambroſe, *S.* Cyprian, *S.* Gregory Nazianzene, *and others.*

*Ut ſententiis Epiſcoporum qui Scripturas ſacras ingenti gloria tractaverunt, tua, juliane, machinamenta ſubvertam. *Lib.* 2. *contr. Jul. c.* 1.

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Remarks.

1. WE do not deny but amicable Conferences, in which matters are propoſed without the wranglings of Diſpute, are the likelieſt ways to convince people: And whenever they ſhew us their doctrines directly in the Scripture and Tradition, we will be very unreaſonable if we do not yield upon that Evidence. When they give us good authorities from Scripture and Tradition for the Worſhip of Images and Saints, for adoring the Hoſt, for dividing the Sacrament, for redeeming Souls out of Purgatory, for denying the people the free uſe of the Scriptures, for obliging them to worſhip God in a Tongue not underſtood by them, we will confeſs our ſelves very obſtinate men if we reſiſt ſuch Conviction.

2. The ſhewing barely ſome paſſages, without conſidering the whole ſcope of them, with the ſenſe in which ſuch words were uſed, in ſuch ages, and by ſuch Fathers will certainly miſguide us, therefore all theſe muſt be alſo taken in for making this Enquiry exactly. Allowances alſo muſt be made

for

for the heats of Eloquence in Sermons or warm Diſcourſes, ſince one paſſage ſtrictly and philoſophically expreſſed is ſtronger than a hundred, in which the heat of Zeal and the Figures of Rhetorick tranſport the Writer. And thus if the Fathers diſputing againſt thoſe who ſaid that the Humane Nature of Chriſt was ſwallowed up by his Divine Nature, urge this to prove that the Humane Nature did ſtill ſubſiſt, that in the Sacrament after the Conſecration, in which there is an Union between the Elements and the Body and Blood of Chriſt, they do ſtill retain their *proper nature and ſubſtance*; ſuch expreſſions uſed on ſuch a deſign lead us more infallibly to know what they thought in this matter, than any thing that they ſaid with deſign only to beget Reverence and Devotion can do.

3. The Ancient Councils were not ſo ſollicitous as this Paper would inſinuate, to prove a Tradition from the Fathers of the firſt Ages. They took great care to prove the truth, which they decreed, by many arguments from Scripture; but for the Tradition, they thought it enough to ſhew that they did innovate in nothing, and that

ſome

ſome Fathers before them had taught what they decreed. We have not the acts of the two firſt General Councils, but we may very probably gather upon what grounds thoſe at *Nice* proceeded, by what S. *Athanaſius* wrote as an Apology for their Symbol, in particular for the word *Conſubſtantial*, which he proves by many conſequences drawn from Scripture, but for the Tradition of it he only cites four Fathers, and none of thoſe were very ancient: They are *Theogniſtus*, *Denis* of *Alexandria*, *Denis* of *Rome*, and *Origen*; and yet both that *a* Father, *b Hilary*, and *c* S. *Baſil* acknowledge that *Denis* of *Alexandria* wavered much in that matter; and it is well known what advantages were taken from many of *Origen*'s expreſſions. So here we have only two undiſputed Fathers that conveyed this Tradition. We have the Acts of the third General Council yet preſerved, and in them we find a Tradition indeed alledged, but except S. *Cyprian* and S. *Peter* of *Alexandria*, they cite none but thoſe that had lived after the Council of *Nice*; and Pope *Leo*'s Letter to *Flavian*, to which the Council of *Chalcedon* aſſented, is an entire contexture of authorities drawn from Scripture, with-

Lib. de decret. Conc. Nic.

a *Ath. Epiſt. de Senten. Dion. Alex.*
b *Lib. de Syn.*
c *Epiſt.* 41.

Conc. Eph. act. 1.

without ſo much as any one citation of any Father. It is true, there is added to the end of that Letter a Collection of ſome ſayings of ſix Fathers, *Hilary*, *Ambroſe*, *Nazianzene*, *Chryſoſtome*, *Auſtin* and *Cyril*, who had all except one, lived within ſixty years or a little more, of that time. So it is certain they founded their Faith only on the Scripture, and not on Tradition, otherwiſe they had taken more pains to have made it out, and had not been ſo eaſily ſatisfied with what a few late Writers had ſaid: And thus it may be preſumed, that all the end for which they cited them, was only to ſhew that they did not broach new and unheard of opinions. And S. *Auſtin* could not think that S. *Cyprian*'s opinion alone was a ſufficient proof of the Doctrine of the firſt three Centuries for Original Sin, and yet he cites no other that lived in thoſe Ages. Nor could S. *Ambroſe*, and *Nazianzene* that had lived in his own time, be cited to prove the Tradition of former Ages. And whereas it is inſinuated that he cited *others*, one would expect to find a Catalogue of many other Fathers wrapt up in this *plural*, whereas all reſolves into *Hilary* alone. And we have

have a more evident Indication of S. *Auſtin*'s ſenſe, as to the laſt reſort in matters of Controverſie, than this they offer in that celebrated ſaying of his, when he was writing againſt *Maximinus* the *Arian* Biſhop. * *But neither may I make uſe of the* Nicene *Council, nor you that of* Arimini, *as that which ought to pre-judge us in this matter; for neither am I held by the authority of the one, nor you by the authority of the other. Let the one ſide and cauſe, and their reaſons, be brought againſt the other from the authorities of the Scriptures, that do not belong to either ſide, but are Witneſſes common to both.*

* Sed nunc nec ego Nicenum, nec tu debes Arimineńſe tanquam præjudicaturus proferre Concilium; nec ego hujus authoritate, nec tu illius detineris. Scripturarum authoritatibus non quorumque propriis ſed utriuſque communibus teſtibus, res cum re, cauſa cum cauſâ, ratio cum ratione concerter. *Lib.* 3. *cont. Max. cap.* 14.

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The Fourth Method

IS to tell them that their Miniſters can never do this, nor ſhew in the Scriptures any of their Articles that are controverted, and this is very true. For example, they can never bring any formal Text to prove that Original Sin remains, as to the guilt of it after Baptiſm, that we receive the Body of Jeſus Chriſt only by Faith; that after the Conſecration, the Sacrament is ſtill Bread; that there is no Purgatory, and that we do not merit any thing by our good works. And to this it may be added, that among all thoſe paſſages that are on the Margent of their Confeſſion, there is not one that ſays that which they cite it for, either in expreſs or equivalent terms, or in the ſame ſenſe. This is the Method of Mr. Veron, *which he took from S.* Auſtin, *who ſays to the* Manichæans, Shew me that that is in the Scripture; *and in another place,* Let him ſhew me that that is to be found in the Holy Scripture. *We muſt then boldly tell them, That they cannot prove any of their Articles that are in diſpute, nor diſpute againſt any of ours by any paſſages of Scripture, neither in expreſs terms, nor by ſufficient conſequences, ſo*

as

as to make their Doctrine be received, as the Faith, *and ours paſs for Error.*

Remarks.

THe firſt part of this Article proceeds upon *Veron*'s Method of putting us to prove our Doctrines by expreſs words of Scripture, but ſome more cautious perſon has added in the concluſion a *Salvo* for good conſequences drawn from them; upon which we yield that this is a very good Method, and are ready to joyn iſſue upon it. If they intend ſtill to build upon that notion of *expreſs words*, we deſire it may be conſidered, that the true meaning of all paſſages is not to be taken only from the bare words, but from the contexture of the Diſcourſe, and the deſign upon which they are made uſe of; and that Rule of Logick being infallibly true, That what things ſoever agree in any third thing, they do alſo agree among themſelves, it is certain that a true conſequence is as good a proof as a formal paſſage. Thus did our Saviour prove the Reſurrection from the Scriptures by a very remote conſequence, ſince God was ſaid

ſaid to be *the God of* Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob, *and was the God of the Living and not of the Dead.* So did the Apoſtles prove Chriſt's being the promiſed *Meſſias*, and the obligation to obſerve the *Moſaical* Ceremonies to have ceaſed upon his coming, by many conſequences, but not by the expreſs words of Scripture. All the arguings of the Fathers againſt the Hereticks run on Conſequences drawn from Scripture, as may appear in all their Synodical Letters, more particularly in that formerly cited of Pope *Leo* to *Flavian*, to which the Fourth General Council aſſented. This Plea does very ill become men that pretend ſuch reverence to Antiquity, ſince it was that upon which all the Ancient Hereticks ſet up their ſtrength, as the moſt plauſible pretence by which they thought they could cover themſelves. So the *a Arians* at *Arimini* give this reaſon for rejecting the word *Conſubſtantial*, becauſe it was not in the Scriptures. The *b Macedonians* laid hold of the ſame pretence. *c Neſtorius* gives this as his chief reaſon for denying the Virgin to be the Mother of God: And *d Eutyches* covered himſelf alſo with this queſtion, *In what Scripture were the two Natures of Chriſt*

a *Athan. de Syn. Arim. & Seleuc. Hilary de Synod. Auguſt. lib. 3. cont. Maxim. cap. 3. & Ep. 74, & 78.*
b *Nazianz. Orat. 37.*
c *Act. Syn. Eph. Action 1.*
d *Act. 6. Syn. Conſt. in Act. 2. Syn. Chalced.*

Chriſt to be found? And his followers did afterwards inſiſt ſo much on this Plea, that *Theodoret* wrote two large Diſcourſes on purpoſe to ſhew the weakneſs of this pretence. So that after all the noiſe they make about the Primitive Church, they follow the ſame tract in which the Hereticks that were condemned by the firſt four General Councils, went; and they put us to do the ſame thing that the Hereticks then put on the Orthodox: But we make the ſame anſwer to it which the Fathers did, That the ſenſe of the Scriptures is to be conſidered more than the words: So that what is according to the true ſenſe, is as much proved by Scripture, as if it were contained in it in ſo many expreſs words. And yet this Plea had a much greater ſtrength in it, as it was managed by thoſe Hereticks; for thoſe conteſts being concerning myſteries which exceed our apprehenſions, it was not an unreaſonable thing at firſt view to ſay, that in ſuch things which we cannot perfectly comprehend, it is not ſafe to proceed by deductions or conſequences, and therefore it ſeemed ſafer to hold ſtrictly to Scripture Phraſes, but in other points into which our underſtandings

can carry us further, it is much more abſurd to exact of us expreſs words of Scripture.

2. Moſt of the points about which we diſpute with the Church of *Rome*, are additions made by them to the ſimplicity of the Chriſtian Religion. So much as we own of the Chriſtian Religion they own likewiſe. In the other particulars, our Doctrine with relation to them is made up of Negatives, and theirs is the affirmative; and ſince all Negatives, eſpecially in matters of Religion prove themſelves, it falls to their ſhare to prove thoſe Additions which they have made to our Faith, and to the Doctrine contained in the Scriptures.

3. Though this is a ſure Maxime, yet our Plea is ſtronger, for there are many things taught by them againſt the expreſs words of Scripture; as their worſhipping Images, their not drinking all of the Cup, their worſhipping of Angels, their not worſhipping God in a tongue which the unlearned underſtand, and to which they can ſay, *Amen*; their ſetting up more Mediators between God and us than one: Whereas S. *Paul* exhorting us to make Prayers to God, tells us there is one Media-

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tor, which ſhews that he ſpake there his ſingle Interceſſion with God on our behalf.

4. We do not only build our Doctrine upon ſome few paſſages of the Scripture, in which perhaps a Critical Writer might eaſily raiſe much duſt, but upon that in which we cannot be ſo eaſily miſtaken, which is the main ſcope of the whole New Teſtament, and the deſign of Chriſtianity, which we believe is reverſed in their Church by the Idolatry and Superſtition that is in it.

5. As for the particulars which they call on us to prove, as they are very few, ſo ſcarce any of them is of the greateſt conſequence. The firſt is a ſpeculative point, about which we would never have broke Communion with them. For the ſecond, that we receive Chriſt only *by Faith*, if the third is true, that the Sacrament is ſtill Bread, then that muſt be alſo true: Now S. *Paul* calls it ſo four ſeveral times, as alſo our Saviour calls the Cup the *Fruit of the Vine*. As for our denying Purgatory, it is a Negative, and they muſt prove it. Nor ſhould we have broken Communion, for their opinion concerning it, if they

had not added to that, the redeeming Souls out of it with Maſſes, by which the Worſhip is corrupted, contrary to the inſtitution of the Sacrament. And for the laſt, in the ſenſe in which many of them aſſert it, we do not raiſe any Controverſie about it, for we know that God rewards our good works, or rather crowns his own Grace in us.

The fifth Method

IS the Peaceable Method, and without diſpute founded on the Synod of Dort, *which all the pretended Reformed Churches of* France *have received, and which has defined according to the Holy Scripture, that when there is a diſpute concerning any Controverted Article between two parties that are both within the true Church, it is neceſſary to refer it to the judgement of the Synod, and that he who refuſes to ſubmit himſelf, becomes guilty of Hereſie and Schiſm. Now if we will run back to the time in which the diſpute began concerning any Article, for inſtance that of the Real Preſence, both the parties in the debate, as well the Anceſtors of thoſe of the P. R. Religion as ours, were in the*

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ſame Church, which was the true Church; for there was no other before the Separation, which was not then made: Then their Anceſtors, who would not ſubmit to the Judgement of the Church, and have ſeparated from her on no other account but becauſe ſhe had condemned their ſentiments were Schiſmaticks and Hereticks: And thoſe who at this day ſucceed them are in the ſame manner guilty, ſince they follow their opinions: And to this they can make no other Anſwer, but that which the Hereticks that have been condemned in all Ages might have made. This Method is proved in all its parts in the little Treatiſe that has been made about it.

Remarks.

IT is not unwiſely done to call this a Method that is to paſs without diſpute, for it will not bear one: And 1. There is this difference between the principles of Proteſtants and thoſe of the Church of *Rome*, that whereas the latter are bound to juſtifie whatever has been decreed in a General Council as a rule either of Faith or Manners; the former are not ſo tied, and much leſs are they bound by the deciſion of a National Council, though never ſo ſolemn. It is natural for all Judicatories to raiſe their own authority as high as they can, and ſo if any Synod has made any ſuch Declaration, it lies on them to juſtifie it, but the reſt of thoſe who have ſeparated from the corruptions of the Church of *Rome* are not concerned in it.

2. The principle of Proteſtants, with relation to the majority even in a General Council, is, That when any Doctrines are eſtabliſhed or condemned upon the Authorities of the Scriptures, thoſe who differ from them, and do think that the Council miſunderſtood the Scriptures are bound to ſuſpect themſelves a little, and to review the matter with greater

greater application, and not to adhere to their former opinions out of pride or obſtinacy: They are alſo bound to conſider well of their opinions, though they appear ſtill to be true, yet if they are of that importance that the publiſhing them is neceſſary to Salvation; for unleſs it is ſo, the Peace of the Church is not to be rent by them: Yet if they are required to profeſs that they believe opinions which they think falſe, if they were never ſo inconſiderable, no man ought to go againſt his Conſcience; But if a man after his ſtricteſt enquiries, is ſtill perſuaded that a Council has decreed againſt the true meaning of the Scriptures, in a point neceſſary to Salvation, then he muſt prefer God to Man, and follow the ſounder, though it ſhould prove to be the much leſſer party: And if any Company or Synod of Proteſtants have decreed any thing contrary to this, in ſo far they have departed from the Proteſtant principles.

3. Difference is to be made alſo between Hereſie and Schiſm in a Legal and a Vulgar ſenſe, and what is truly ſuch in the ſight of God. The Sentence of a Supream Court from which there lies no Appeal, makes one le-

gally a Criminal: But if he is innocent, he is not the leſs innocent becauſe a hard Sentence is paſt againſt him. So Hereſie and Schiſm may take their denominations from the Sentence of a National or General Council: But in that which is the ſenſe of thoſe words that makes them Criminal, Hereſie is nothing but an obſtinate perſiſting in errours, contrary to Divine Revelation, after one has had a ſufficient means of Inſtruction; and Schiſm is an ill grounded Separation from the Body of the Church: So it muſt be the Divine Revelation, and not the authority of a Synod that can prove one who holds contrary opinions to be an Heretick, and the grounds of the Separation muſt be likewiſe examined before one can be concluded a Schiſmatick.

4. Though the Concluſions and Definitions made by the Synod of *Dort* are perhaps generally received in *France*, yet that does not bind them up to ſubſcribe every thing that was aſſerted in that Synod: Nor do they found their aſſent to thoſe opinions on the authority of that Synod, but upon the Evidence of thoſe places of Scripture from which they deduced them.

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5. Since thoſe of that Communion object a National Synod to the Proteſtants, this may be turned back on them with greater advantage, in ſome points eſtabliſhed by Councils, which they eſteem not only General but Infallible. In the Third Council of the *Lateran* it was decreed, That all Princes who favoured Hereticks did forfeit their Rights, and a Plenary Indulgence was granted to all that fought againſt them. In the Fourth Council at the ſame place it was decreed, That the Pope might not only declare this forfeiture, but abſolve the Subjects from their Oaths of Obedience, and transfer their Dominions upon others. In the Firſt Council at *Lions* they joyned with the Pope in thundring the Sentence of Depoſition againſt the Emperour *Frederick* the Firſt, which in the preamble is grounded on ſome places of Scripture, of which if they were the Infallible Expoſitors, then this power is an Article of Faith. And in the laſt place the Council of *Conſtance* decreed, That the Faith of a Safe-Conduct was not to be kept to an Heretick, that had come to the place of Judgement relying on it, even though he would not have come without it. When Cruelty, Rebellion

bellion and Treachery were thus decreed in Courts, which among them are of ſo ſacred an authority; It is viſible how much greater advantages we have of them in this point than any they can pretend againſt us.

6. For the Synod of *Dort* I will not undertake the Apology neither for their Decrees nor for their Aſſertions; and will not ſtick to ſay that how true ſoever many of their Concluſions may be, yet the defining ſuch myſterious matters as the order of the Divine Decrees, and the Influences of Gods Grace on the wills of men, in ſo poſitive a manner, and the impoſing their Aſſertions on all the Miniſters of their Communion, was that which many as ſincere Proteſtants as any are, have ever diſliked and condemned, as a weakening the Union of the Proteſtant Church, and an aſſuming too much of that authority which we condemn in the Church of *Rome*. For though they ſuppoſed that they made their definitions upon the grounds of Scripture, ſo that in this ſenſe the authority of the Synod was meerly Declarative; yet the queſtion will ſtill recur, Whether they underſtood the paſſages which they built on, right or not? And if they underſtood them

them wrong, then according to Proteſtant principles, their Decrees had no ſuch binding authority, that the receding from them could make one guilty either of Hereſie or Schiſm.

The Sixth Method

I*S to ſhew them that the* Roman *Church, or that Church which acknowledges the Pope or the Biſhop of* Rome, *the Succeſſor of S.* Peter, *to be her Head all the World over, is the true Church: Becauſe there is no other beſides her that has that undoubted mark, which is a perpetual Viſibility without Interruption, ſince Chriſt's time to this day. This is a Method common to all the Catholicks, and is very well and briefly ſet forth in the little Treatiſe of the true Church, joyned to that of the Peaceable Method. This is that of which S.* Auſtin *makes moſt frequent uſe againſt the* Donatiſts, *and chiefly in his Book of the Unity of the Church; and in his Epiſtles, of which the moſt remarkable paſſages relating to this matter, are gathered together by the late Arch-biſhop of* Rouen, *in the firſt Book of his Apology for the Goſpel, in which he handles this matter excellently well.*

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One may add to this Method the Maxims, of which Tertullian *makes uſe in his Treatiſe of* Preſcriptions *againſt the Hereticks, and alſo* Vincentius Lyrinenſis *in his Advices. It is enough to ſay on this occaſion that thoſe two Treatiſes may ſatisfie any that will read them without prepoſſeſſion, in order to their forming a juſt Judgement of the true Church of Jeſus Chriſt, and of all thoſe Societies that would uſurp that name.*

Remarks.

THis Method is ſo common that there was no reaſon in any ſort to give Mr. *Maimbourg* the honour of it, unleſs it was that the Aſſembly intended to do him this publick honour to ballance his diſgrace at *Rome*: But let us examine it.

1. This aſſerts that no other Church has a perpetual Succeſſion without interruption, but that which derives it from *Rome*, which is ſo contrary to what every one knows, that Mr. *Maimbourg* was certainly inſpired with the Spirit of his Order when he writ it. Do not all the *Greek* Churches, and all the Churches that have their Ordination from them, all from the Northern Empire

Empire of *Muſcovy* to the Southern of the *Abaſſines*, together with all thoſe in the Eaſt, derive from the Apoſtles by an uninterrupted ſeries? For till the Authority of the Church of *Rome* is proved, which is the thing in queſtion, their being declared Schiſmaticks or Hereticks by it, does not interrupt this Succeſſion.

2. The Church of *England* has the ſame Succeſſion that the Church of *Rome* had in *Gregory* the Great's time (to wave the more ancient pretenſions of the *Brittiſh* Churches) and the Biſhops of this Church being bound by one of their Sponſions made at their Conſecration, according to the *Roman* Pontifical, to inſtruct their flock in the true Faith according to the Scriptures, they were obliged to make good this promiſe. Nor can it be pretended that they have thereupon forfeited their Orders, and by conſequence their Succeſſion.

3. The Succeſſion of the Church of *Rome* cannot be ſaid to be uninterrupted, if either Hereſie or Schiſm can cut it off. It is well known that *Felix*, *Liberius*, and *Honorius*, to name no more, were Hereticks; and if Ordinations by Schiſmaticks or unlawful Uſurpers

Uſurpers be to be annulled, which was judged in the caſe of *Photius*, and was often practiſed at *Rome*, then the many Schiſms and unjuſt uſurpations that have been in that See, will make the Succeſſion of their Orders the moſt diſputable thing that can be, eſpecially during that Schiſm that laſted almoſt forty years; all the Churches of that Communion having derived their Orders from one or other of the Popes: and if the Popes at *Avignon* were the Uſurpers, then let the *Gallican* Churches ſee how they can juſtifie the ſeries of their Ordinations: To all which may be added the impoſſibility of proving a true Succeſſion in Orders, if the Vertue of the Sacraments depends on the Intention of him who officiates, ſince ſecret Intentions are only known to God.

4. The ground on which the *Donatiſts* ſeparated from the Orthodox Churches being at firſt founded on amatter of Fact, which was of the pretended Irregularity of thoſe who ordained *Cecilian*, which they afterwards defended upon this, that the Church could be only compoſed of good men, and that the Sacraments were of no Vertue when diſpenſed by ill hands; all that S. *Auſtin*

ſtin ſays is to be governed by this Hypotheſis, againſt which he argues: And it being once granted that the Church was not corrupted neither in Doctrine nor Worſhip, we are very ready to ſubſcribe to every expreſſion of his; and do freely acknowledge that the making a rent in a Church, that is pure both in Doctrine and Worſhip, upon any particular or perſonal account, is a ſin that cannot be ſufficiently deteſted and condemned. I ſhall not enter into a particular diſcuſſion of every paſſage of S. *Auſtin*'s, but if in ſome he ſeems to go too far for the authority of the Church, I ſhall only offer two general conſiderations concerning theſe. The firſt is, That it is a Maxime with Lawyers, That general words in Laws are to be reſtricted to the preambles and chief deſign of theſe Laws: And if this is true of Laws that are commonly penned with more coldneſs and upon greater deliberation, it is much more applicable to warm diſcourſes, where the heat of Contradiction, and the Zeal of a Writer, makes that things are often aggravated, and carried too far; but ſtill all thoſe expreſſions are to be mollified and reſtricted to that which was the ſubject matter

matter of the debate; therefore thoſe expreſſions of S. *Auſtin*'s, ſuppoſing that the Church was ſtill ſound in her Doctrine and Worſhip, are to be governed by that Hypotheſis. The ſecond is, That many of thoſe who urge theſe paſſages on us, do not deny but S. *Auſtin* in the diſputes about Grace and Original Sin was carried too far, though thoſe were the ſubjects on which he employed his lateſt years with the greateſt application: If then it is confeſſed that he wrote too warmly againſt the *Pelagians*, and in that heat advanced ſome propoſitions that need a fair conſtruction, is it unreaſonable for us to ſay that he might have done the ſame, writing againſt the *Donatiſts*?

5. As for *Tertullian*, he that might have converſed with many that could have known S. *Polycarp*, who was both inſtructed and ordained by the Apoſtles, ſo that he might have been the third perſon in the conveyance of the ſenſe of what the Apoſtles had left in Writing, could reaſonably argue as he did againſt the Hereticks; but certainly no man that conſiders the diſtance we live at from thoſe ages, and the many accidents that have ſo often changed the face of the Church, can think it reaſonable

reaſonable to argue upon that ground now. And yet it were eaſie to bring many citatious out of that very Book of *Tertullians*, to ſhew that he grounded his Faith only on the Doctrine of Chriſt, delivered in the Scriptures, how much ſoever he might argue from other Topicks againſt the Hereticks of his time, who indeed were bringing in a New Goſpel into the World.

We willingly receive the Characters that *Vincentius Lyrinenſis* gives of Tradition, that what the Church has at all times and in all places received, is to be believed, and are ready to joyn iſſue upon this, and when they can prove that the Church at all times and in all places has taught the Worſhipping of Images, the Invocation of Saints and Angels, the adoring the Sacrament, and the dividing of it, with many more particulars; we will yield the whole cauſe, and confeſs that we have made a Schiſm in the Church.

The Seventh Method

IS *to let them ſee that thoſe who at firſt pretended to Reform the Church in which they were amongſt us, neither had nor could have any Miſſion, either Ordinary or Extraordinary, to bring us any other Doctrine but that which was then taught; and that by Conſequence none ought to believe them, ſince they had no authority to Preach as they did.* How can they Preach if they are not ſent. *This is the ordinary Method that puts the Miniſters to the neceſſity of proving their Miſſion, which is a thing that they can never do. This cuts off all diſputes, and is one of the Methods of Cardinal* Richelieu.

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Remarks.

1. IF the firſt Reformers had delivered a new Doctrine which was never formerly taught, it had been neceſſary for them to have had a very extraordinary Miſſion, and to have confirmed it by very extraordinary ſigns, but when they grounded all they ſaid upon that very Book, which was and is ſtill received as the unalterable Law of all Chriſtians; then if every man is bound to take care of his own Salvation, and is in Charity obliged to let others ſee that ſame light that guides himſelf, then I ſay an extraordinary Miſſion was not neceſſary when the thing in diſpute was not a new Doctrine, but the true meaning of thoſe Writings which were on all hands acknowledged to be Divine.

2. If notwithſtanding the neceſſity of not raiſing War in Civil Government, without an expreſs Commiſſion from the Prince or Supream Authority, yet in a General Rebellion, when the ways of intercourſe with the Prince are cut off, if it be not only a lawful but a commendable action for any ſubject, even without a Commiſſion, to

raiſe what force he can for the ſervice of the Prince: Then if it be true, that the Weſtern Churches had generally revolted from the rules of the Goſpel, that was a ſufficient warrant for any perſon to endeavour a Reformation.

3. The nature of the Chriſtian Religion is to be well conſidered, in which all Chriſtians are a *Royal Prieſthood*: And though it be highly neceſſary for all the ends of Religion to maintain peace and Order, and to convey down an authority for ſacred adminiſtrations in ſuch a way as tends moſt to advance thoſe ends; yet this cannot be lookt on as indiſpenſable and abſolutely neceſſary. Among the *Jews*, as there were many ſervices in which none but Prieſts and *Levites* could officiate, ſo the Succeſſion went in the natural courſe of Deſcent. But in the Chriſtian Church there are no poſitive Laws ſo appropriated, and therefore in caſes of extream and unavoidable neceſſity every Chriſtian may make uſe of that dormant priviledge of being a Royal Prieſt, and ſo this difficulty muſt be reſolved, by examining the merits of the whole cauſe, for if the neceſſity was not extream and unavoidable, we acknowledge it had been

a Sacrilegious preſumption for any that was not called in the ordinary manner to meddle in Holy things

4. It is but a ſmall part of the Reformed Churches that is concerned in this. Here in *England* our Reformers had the ordinary Miſſion; and in moſt places beyond Sea the firſt Preachers had been ordained *Prieſts*: And it will not be eaſie to prove that Lay-men, yea, and Women may baptize in caſes of neceſſity, when that is often but an imaginary neceſſity, and that yet Prieſts in a caſe of real neceſſity may not ordain other Prieſts. For all the Rules of Order are ſuperſeded by extraordinary caſes, and in Moral as well as in Natural things, every Individual has a Right to propagate its kind, and though it may be reaſonable to regulate that, yet it can never be wholly cut off.

The Eighth Method

IS *to tell them, You do not know that ſuch or ſuch a Book of the Scripture is the Word of God but by the Church in which you were before your Schiſm: So that you cannot know what is the true ſenſe of thoſe paſſages that are in diſpute, but by that ſame Church which conveys it to you. This is S.* Auſtin's *method in many places, but above all in his Book* De utilitate Credendi, *and in his Book* Contra Epiſtolam fundamenti: * *In which he ſays,* I would not believe the Goſpel, if the authority of the Church did not oblige me to it. *This Method is handſomely managed in the Treatiſe of the true Word of God, joyned to the Peaceable Method.*

* Ego vero evangelio non crederem, niſi me Eccleſiæ Catholicæ moveret authoritas *Cont. Epiſt. Fund. cap.* 5.

Remarks.

1. GReat difference is to be made between the conveyance of Books and an Oral Tradition of Doctrine. It is very eaſie to carry down the one in a way that is Morally Infallible: An exact copying being all that is neceſſary for that: Whereas it is morally impoſſible to prevent frauds and impoſtures in the other, in a courſe of ſome Ages, eſpecially in times of Ignorance and Corruption, in which the Credulity of unthinking people, has made an eaſie game to the Craft and Induſtry of covetous and aſpiring Prieſts. Few were then at the pains to examine any thing, but took all upon Truſt, and became ſo ready of belief, that the more incredible a thing ſeemed to be, they ſwallowed it down the more willingly.

2. If this way of reaſoning will hold good, it was as ſtrong in the mouths of the *Jews* in our Saviours time; for the High Prieſt and *Sanhedrim* might have as reaſonably pretended that ſince they had conveyed down the Books in which the Prophecies of the *Meſſiah*

were contained, they had likewiſe the right to expound thoſe Prophecies.

3. A Witneſs that hands a thing down without Additions, is very different from a Judge that delivers things on his own Authority. We freely own the Church to be ſuch a Witneſs that there is no colour of reaſon to disbelieve the Tradition of the Books, but we ſee great cauſe to queſtion the credit of her deciſions.

4. In this Tradition of Books we have not barely the Tradition of the Church for it. We find in all ages ſince the Books of the New Teſtament were written, ſeveral Authors have cited many and large paſſages out of them: We find they were very quickly tranſlated into many other Languages, and diverſe of thoſe are conveyed down to us. There were alſo ſo many Copies of theſe Books every where, that though one had reſolved on ſo Sacrilegious an attempt as the corrupting them had been, he could not have ſucceeded in it to any great degree. Some additions might have been made in ſome Copies, and ſo from thoſe they might have been derived to others, but theſe could not have been conſiderable, otherwiſe they had

had been diſcovered and complained of, and when we find the Church engaged in conteſts with Hereticks and Schiſmaticks, we ſee both ſides appealed to the Scriptures, and neither of them reproached the other for violating that Sacred Truſt. And the noiſe we find of the ſmall change of a Letter in the *Arian* Controverſie, ſhews us how exact they were in preſerving theſe Records: As for the Errours of Tranſcribers that is incident to the Nature of Man, and though ſome Errours have crept into ſome Copies, yet all theſe put together do not alter any one point of our Religion; ſo that they are not of great conſequence. Thus it appears how much reaſon we have to receive the Scriptures upon the credit of ſuch a Tradition. But for Oral Tradition, it is viſible how it might have been ſo managed as quickly to change the whole Nature of Religion. Natural Religion was ſoon corrupted when it paſſed down in this Conveyance, even during the long lives of the Ancient Patriarchs, who had thereby an advantage to keep this pure, that after ages, in which the life of Man is ſo ſhortned, cannot pretend to. We alſo

alſo ſee to what a degree the *Jewiſh* Tradition became corrupted in our Saviours time, particularly in one point, which may be called the moſt eſſential part of their Religion, to wit, concerning their *Meſſias*, what the nature of his Perſon and Kingdome were to be. So that they all expected a Great Conquerour, a ſecond *Moſes*, or a *David*; ſo ineffectual a mean is Oral Tradition, for conveying down any Doctrine pure or uncorrupted.

The

The Ninth Method

IS to tell them the Church in which they were before they made the Separation, was the true Church, becauſe it was the only Church; ſo that they could not Reform the Doctrine without making another Church: For then ſhe muſt have fallen into Errour, and by conſequence the Gates of Hell *muſt have prevailed againſt her, which is directly contrary to the Promiſe of Jeſus Chriſt that cannot fail,* * The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt her

* Portæ Inferi non prævalebunt adverſus eam. Matth. 1. 16.

Remarks.

1. A Church may be a True Church, and yet be corrupted by many Errours, for a True Church is a Society of men, among whom are the certain means of Salvation, and ſuch was the *Jewiſh* Church in our Saviours time: For their Sacrifices had ſtill an Expiatory Vertue, and the Covenant made with that people ſtood ſtill, and yet they were over-run with many Errours, chiefly in their notions of the *Meſſias*. And thus as long as the Church of *Rome* acknowledges the Expiation, made by the Death of Chriſt, and applied to all that truly believe and amend their lives, ſo long ſhe is a True Church. So that thoſe of that Communion who adhere truly to that which is the great fundamental of the Chriſtian Religion may be ſaved: But when ſo many things were added to this, that it was very hard to preſerve this fundamental truth pure and entire, then it was neceſſary for thoſe who were better enlightned, to call on others to correct the abuſes that had crept in.

2. It is hard to build a great ſuperſtructure on a figurative expreſſion, of

of which it is not eaſie to find out the true and full ſenſe: And in this that is cited there are but three terms, and about every one of them great and juſt grounds of doubting do appear. 1. It is not certain what is meant by the *Gates of Hell*, which is an odd figure for an aſſailant: If by Gates we mean Councils, becauſe the Magiſtrates and Courts among the *Jews* ſate in the Gates, then the meaning will be, that the Craft of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt the Church, that is, ſhall not root out Chriſtianity: or if by *Gates of Hell*, or the *Grave*, according to a common *Greek* Phraſe, *Death* be to be underſtood, it being the Gate through which we paſs to the Grave, then the meaning is this, that the Church ſhall never die or be extinguiſhed. Nor is there leſs difficulty to be made about the ſignification of the word *Church*: Whether it is to be meant in general of the body of Chriſtians, or of the Paſtors of the Church, and of the majority of them. The Context ſeems to carry it for the Body of Chriſtians, and then the meaning will be only this, That there ſhall ſtill be a Body of Chriſtians in the World. And it cannot be proved that any thing elſe is to be under-

underſtood by the word *Church* in that place. A third difficulty may be alſo raiſed upon the extent of the word *Prevail*, whether a total overthrow, or any ſingle advantage is to be underſtood by it; or whether this prevailing is to be reſtrained only to the fundamentals of Chriſtianity, or is to be extended to all ſorts of truth; or whether it is to be underſtood of corrupting the Doctrine, or of vitiating the Morals of Chriſtians? Thus it is apparent how many difficulties may be ſtarted concerning the meaning of thoſe words. So that at beſt the ſenſe of them is doubtful, and therefore it will be a ſtrange and raſh adventure to determine any thing in matters of great moment upon the authority of ſuch a figurative expreſſion.

3. Though the *Roman* Church had been corrupted, that will not infer that the *Gates of Hell* had prevailed againſt the *Church*, for that being but the Center of the Union of ſome of the Weſtern Nations, a corruption in it does not prove that the whole Church was corrupted, for there were many other Churches in other parts of the World beſides thoſe of that Communion.

The

The Tenth Method

IS *that of the Biſhop of* Meaux, *lately of* Condom, *in his Book entituled*, The expoſition of the Doctrine of the Catholick Church. *In which he does in every Article diſtinguiſh between that which is preciſely of Faith, and that which is not ſo; and ſhews that there is nothing in our belief that may give diſtaſt to a reaſonable Spirit, unleſs they will look on the abuſes of ſome particular perſons which we condemn, as our belief, or impute Errours to us falſely, or charge us with the explications of ſome Doctors that are neither received nor authorized by the Church. This method is taken from S.* Hilary *in his Book of Synods.* * Let us (*ſays he*) altogether condemn falſe Interpretations, but let us not deſtroy the certainty of the Faith. —The Word Conſubſtantial may be ill underſtood, but let it be eſtabliſhed in a ſenſe in which it may be well underſtood. --The right ſtate of the Faith may be eſtabliſhed among us, ſo as we may neither reverſe that which has been well eſtabliſhed. nor cut off thoſe things that have been ill underſtood.

* Damnemus in commune vitioſam Intelligentiam, non auferamus fidei ſecuritatem. —Sed Homoouſion poteſt male intelligi, conſtituatur qualiter poſſit bene intelligi. ---Poteſt Inter nos optimus fidei ſtatus condi, ut nec ea quæ bene ſunt conſtituta vexentur, & quæ male ſunt Intellecta reſecentur. *Hil. lib. de Syn. pag.* 394, & 396. *of the* Paris *Edition.* 1652.

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Remarks.

SOmewhat was ſaid in the Preface, with relation to this, which ſhall not be here repeated. It is not to be denied but in the management of Controverſies the heat of Diſpute has carried many too far, and ſome have ſtudied to raiſe many Imaginary Controverſies, which ſubſiſt only upon ſome miſunderſtood terms and expreſſions of the contrary party: And things have been on all hands aggravated in many particulars out of meaſure: So that they have deſerved well of the Church that have brought matters as near a Reconciliation as may be. But after all this, it were a ſtrange impoſition on this and the preceding age to perſuade the World that notwithſtanding all the differences of Religion, and the unhappy effects that have followed upon them, that they really were all the while of the ſame mind, but were not ſo happy as to find it out till that excellent Prelate helpt them to it, by letting them ſee how near the conceſſions of both ſides are to one another; ſo that a little converſation and dexterity in putting the ſofteſt conſtruction that may

may be on the contrary perſuaſion might bring them to be of the ſame mind. But if in order to this, the ſenſe of both ſides is ſo far ſtretched, that neither party can own it for a true account of their ſentiments, then this muſt be concluded to be only the Ingenious Eſſay of a very witty man, who would take advantage of ſome expreſſions, to perſwade people that they have opinions which really they have not. I ſhall not enter into a particular diſquiſition of thoſe things which have been already ſo fully examined, but refer the Reader to the Anſwers that have been given to that famous Book.

2. The received and authorized Offices of the Church of *Rome*, and the Language in which they do daily make their Addreſſes to Heaven is that on which the moſt unanſwerable and the ſtrongeſt part of our Plea for our Separation is founded, and it is not an ingenuous way of writing to affix ſome forced ſenſes to thoſe plain expreſſions, becauſe they being ſo groſs as they are, all wiſe or learned men are aſhamed to defend them, and yet know not how to get them to be reformed, or thrown out: Therefore it is that they ſet

their Wits on work to put ſome better conſtruction on them. But this is a clear violence to the plain ſenſe of thoſe Offices, extorted by the evidence and force of Truth, and gives us this advantage, that it is plain thoſe that ſo qualifie them, are convinced that their Church is in the wrong, and yet for other ends, or perhaps from a miſtaken notion of Unity and Peace, they think fit to continue in it.

3. It is to be hoped, that thoſe who have cited this paſſage out of S. *Hilary*, will conſider thoſe other paſſages cited out of him againſt Perſecution, though a great Errour made in the Tranſlation of this citation, makes me fear that they who rendred it had read him very curſorily.

The

The Eleventh Method

IS drawn from thoſe General Arguments which Divines call the Motives of Credibility: It is that made uſe of by Tertullian, *in his Book of Preſcriptions; and by S.* Auſtin, * *who reckons up the Motives that held him in the Catholick Church.*

* *Contr. Epiſt. Fund. cap.* 45. *Pariſ. Edit.*

Remarks.

1. AS for the Caſe of *Tertullian* and S. *Auſtin*, a great deal was ſaid formerly to ſhew the difference between the Age they lived in, and the grounds they went on; and the preſent ſtate of the Weſtern Church.

2. When it is conſidered that a courſe of many Ages, which by the Confeſſion of all were times of Ignorance and Superſtition, has made a great change in the World, that the groſs Scandals and wonderful Ignorance of thoſe that have governed the See of *Rome*, that the Diſſolution of all the Rules of Eccleſiaſtical Order and Diſcipline both among Clergy and Laity, that the Intereſt the Prieſts, particularly the Popes and the begging Orders that depended

on them, had to promote thoſe, was ſo great and undiſputed, that it is notorious, all the worſt methods of forgeries, both of Writings to authorize them, and of Miracles and Legends to ſupport them, were made uſe of. When, I ſay, all theſe things are ſo plain to every one that has lookt a little into the Hiſtory of former ages, it is no wonder if the Church of *Rome* is ſo much changed from what it was formerly, That the motives made uſe of by *Tertullian* and S. *Auſtin* do not at all belong to the preſent ſtate of the Churches of that Communion: But on the contrary, inſtead of motives to perſwade one to continue in it, there appear upon a general view, a great many juſt and well-grounded prejudices to diſpoſe a man to forſake that Communion.

The

The Twelfth Method

IS both very ſhort and very eaſie: It is to catch them in this Dilemma. Before Wickliff, Luther *and* Calvin (*and one may ſay as much of the* Waldenſes *that lived in the Twelfth Century*) *the Church of thoſe of the P R. Religion was either made up of a little number of the Faithful, or was not at all in being. If it was not at all in being, then theirs is a Falſe Church, ſince it is not perpetual, as the True Church ought to be, according to the promiſe of Jeſus Chriſt,* * The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt her, *and* † I am with you even to the end of the World. *If their Church was in being, it muſt have been according to their own principles Corrupted and Impious: Becauſe they cannot ſhew that little number of the pretended Faithful, who before the Reformation did condemn, as they now do,* * *all the Aſſemblies of the Popiſh Churches, as over-run with Idolatry and Superſtition. They behaved themſelves, at leaſt as to outward appearance, as others did. And thus their Church which was compoſed of that ſmall unknown flock, was not Holy, and by conſequence was not the True Church.*

* Portæ Inferi non prævalebunt adverſus eam.

† Ego vobiſcum ſum uſque ad conſummationem ſeculi.

* *Art.* 31. *of their Confeſſion of Faith.*

Remarks.

1. TO the greateſt part of this, anſwer has been already given: We acknowledge the Church of *Rome* was a True Church, and had in it the means of Salvation though it was overrun with Errours, and Chriſt is truly with his Church as long as thoſe means of Salvation do remain in it. So was the *Jewiſh* Church a True Church after ſhe was in many points corrupted in her Doctrine.

2. In thoſe dark Ages many might have kept themſelves free from the defilements of their Worſhip, though no account is given of them in ſtory. So ſeven thouſand had not bowed their knees to *Baal* in *Elijah*'s time, who were not ſo much as known to that Prophet, though it might have been expected that they would all have willingly diſcovered themſelves to him: And ſince he knew nothing of them, it is very probable they concealed themſelves with great care from all others.

3. All good men have not all the degrees of Illumination, for there might have been great numbers that ſaw the

cor-

corruptions of their Church, but were ſo reſtrained by other opinions concerning the Unity of the Church, that they thought it enough to infuſe their notions into ſome few Diſciples, in whom they confided: and on ſome perhaps that which *Eliſha* ſaid to *Naaman* the *Syrian*, being wrong underſtood by them, had great influence. Others obſerving that the Apoſtles continued to worſhip at the Temple, and offer Sacrifices, which S. *Paul* and thoſe with him that purified themſelves muſt have done, might have from that inferred that one might comply in a Worſhip, though they diſliked many things in it; which, if I am not much miſinformed, is a Maxime that governs many in the *Roman* Communion to this day. I do not excuſe this compliance, but it is not ſo criminal as at firſt view it may appear to be: If it is truly founded on a miſtake of the mind, and not on a baſeneſs in the will, or a rejecting of the Croſs of Chriſt, eſpecially in men that had ſo faint a twilight as that was which they were guided by in thoſe blind times.

4. But to make the worſt of this that can be, and ſhould we grant that through fear they had complied againſt their

Conſciences, this only muſt make the concluſion terrible to them, if they did not repent of it. But God might have ordered the conveyance of truth to be handed down by ſuch defiled hands, and their not being perſonally holy, muſt not be urged too far, to prove that they could not be the true Church. This will come too near the Doctrines of the *Donatiſts*, and many of S. *Auſtin*'s ſayings which they unreaſonably object to us, may be turned upon them. And it will very ill become a Church that acknowledges the Succeſſion of the Biſhop of *Rome* to have been the chief conveyance of Tradition, which is a much greater matter in their principles than it is in ours, to urge the Holineſs of the Members to be eſſential to the being of a Church, when it is acknowledged what a ſort of men the Heads of their Church have been for diverſe Ages.

The

The Thirteenth Method

IS *taken from the nature of Schiſm, which one ought never to make, what reaſons ſoever may be pretended for it, for according to the Miniſters themſelves, no other reaſon can be given for their Separation, but the Errours which they pretend had crept into the Church. But thoſe who were in it as well as they were, did ſtrongly aſſert, as we do to this day, that theſe were no Errours at all but Truths. And it is certain that of opinions which are ſo different, the one muſt be the true Doctrine, and the other muſt be Errour and falſhood; and by conſequence the one muſt be the* good grain, *and the other muſt be the* Tares. *Now it does not belong to particular perſons by their private authority to pluck up that which they pretend to be* Tares. *There is none but* God, *who is the true Father of the Family, that has this authority, and can communicate it to others. It is he who appoints the Reapers, that is the* Pope *and the* Biſhops, *who are repreſented by the* Angels, *to ſeparate the Cockle from the Wheat, and to pluck out the one without touching the other till the time of* Harveſt, *that is in a Council, or by the common conſent of*

of the whole Church, and in that case a Council is not necessary. * Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the Tares, ye root up also the Wheat with them, let both grow together until the Harvest. *Therefore one ought never to separate upon what pretence soever it be, but he must bear with that which he thinks is an abuse and errour, and stay till the Church plucks up the Cockle.* * *This is one of the Methods of S.* Austin *in his Treatises against the* Donatists, *in which he shews from the Examples of* Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Jeremy, *S.* Paul, *who tolerated even the false Apostles, that we ought never to separate from our Brethren, before the solemn condemnation of the Church. He says pursuant to this, that the* Donatists *were* intolerably wicked for having made a Schism, for having erected an Altar against an Altar, and for having separated themselves from the Inheritance of Jesus Christ, which is stretched out over all the Earth, according to the promise that was made to it. *He adds, that if they thought that was but a small matter, they had nothing to do but to see what the Scripture teaches us by the examples we find in it of the punishment of so great*

* Vis imus & colligimus ea? Non; ne forte eradicantes Zizania, eradicetis & triticum; sinite utraque crescere usque ad messem.

* *Lib. de unitate Ecclesiæ, & Psal. con. par. Don. & Epist.* 162 & 171.

Non enim nobis displicent quia tolerant malos, sed quia intolerabiliter mali sunt propter Schisma, propter Altare contra Altare, propter Separationem ab hæreditate Christi toto orbe diffusâ, sicut tanto ante promissa est. *Aug. Ep.* 162.

great a crime; *for ſays he*, Thoſe that made an Idol of the Golden Calf were only puniſhed by the Sword, whereas thoſe who made the Schiſm were ſwallowed up by the Earth: So that by this diverſity of the puniſhments, one may know that Schiſm is a greater crime than Idolatry.

Diverſirate pœnarum, Diverſitas agnoſcitur meritorum. *Ibid.*

We may likewiſe ſee how upon the ſame ſubject he exhorts the Donatiſts *to renounce their wicked Schiſm in his* 171 *Epiſtle, in which among other things he has thoſe excellent words.* *Why will you tear the Lords garments? and why will you not with the reſt of the World leave that Coat of Charity entire, that is all woven of one Thread, which even his Perſecutors themſelves would not rend? *And a little after this*, You pretend that you would avoid that Cockle, that as you alledge, is mixt among us, and that before the time of Harveſt; whereas indeed it is you your ſelves that are this Cockle, for if you were the good grain, you would bear with it, and would not ſeparate your ſelves from the Corn of Jeſus Chriſt.

* Quare diviſores veſtimentorum Domini eſſe vultis? & tunicam illam Charitatis deſuper textam, quam nec perſecutores ejus diviſerunt, terere cum toto orbe non vultis? — Fingitis vos ante tempus meſſis fugere permixta Zizania, quia vos eſtis ſola Zizania: Nam ſi frumenta eſſetis, permixta Zizania toleraretis, & à ſegete Chriſti non vos divideretis. *Aug. Ep.* 171.

We need only change the name Donatiſts *into* Calviniſts: *This is it that ſhews to what degree the Church ever was and ever muſt be acknowledged to be Infallible,*

ſince

ſince we muſt ſubmit to its Deciſions; and the Fathers have eſtabliſhed this ſo ſtrongly that one ought never to ſeparate from her, and that one is by ſo much the more obliged to continue united to her, becauſe ſhe never refuſes to hear the Remonſtrances made to her by her Children.

Remarks.

1. IT was obſerved before how unreaſonable it was to build much on an Allegory, but on this occaſion the Allegory is ſo clearly forced, that it gives juſt cauſe of Suſpicion that the cauſe is weak that muſt be ſupported by ſuch Arguments. For our Saviour makes it ſo plain that the Harveſt is the *end of the World*, that the *Reapers* are *Angels*, and that upon his laſt coming they ſhall gather together the wicked, and caſt them into Hell, and that the Righteous ſhall ſhine in Heaven: That the applying this to a General Council, in which Hereſie ſhall be condemned, is ſuch a fetch, that it muſt be confeſſed they have as eaſie Conſciences as they have warm Fancies, that are wrought on by it.

2. As for that which S. *Auſtin* drew from this againſt the *Donatiſts* who juſtified

ſtified their Separation on the account of the ſins of thoſe who were in the Communion of the Church, it was as pertinent as this is ſtrained; for the ground of the Schiſm being only the mixture of the Cockle with the Wheat, nothing could be more ſtrongly urged againſt them. But it is quite out of the preſent Controverſie between them and us, who do not ſeparate for this mixture, but finding the Wheat it ſelf ſo much corrupted, took care to cleanſe it.

3. We freely acknowledge the great ſin of Schiſm, and the ſevere puniſhment due to it, but for all the ſeverity of the puniſhment inflicted on *Corah* and his Partners, we do not doubt but when the Temple was ſo defiled by Idolatry, under the Kings that polluted the Altar and the Courts of the Lords Houſe with Idols, it was not only no ſin, but a commendable piece of Religion in ſuch caſes to have withdrawn from ſo impious a Worſhip. This is our preſent caſe, and if what we object to their Worſhip is true, then our Separation from it is as neceſſary a Duty as is the preſerving of our lives from Poyſons or Infectious Diſeaſes.

4. The

4. The true ſcope of that Parable ſeems to be a reproof to the Violence of ſuch Church-men as are too apt to condemn and pluck up every thing that they think to be Cockle; and when the declaring what is Cockle is lodged with them, they will be ſure to count every thing ſuch that does not pleaſe them. And then that ſame heat that makes them judge thoſe opinions to be Cockle ſets them on to root them out with ſuch violence, that much good Wheat is in danger to be pluckt up. Therefore to repreſs this, our Saviour commands them under that figure, to let both grow till the end of the World, that is, not to proceed to extremities and to rigorous Methods, but to leave that to God who will judge all at the laſt day. If this were well conſidered, it would put an effectual ſtop to that Spirit of Perſecution which ferments ſo violently in that Church: The language of which is always this, *Let us go and pluck up the Tares*, or that of the two Diſciples who would have called for Fire from Heaven; and becauſe Heaven will not anſwer ſuch bloody demands, they try to raiſe ſuch Fires on Earth as may burn up thoſe whom they call the *Tares*: Not knowing what

what the true Spirit of Chriſtianity is, and that *the Son of Man came not to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave them:* And forget that our Saviour commanded them *to let the Tares grow till the Harveſt.* But this is one of the miſchiefs that follows the humour of expounding the Scriptures fancifully. That the plain meaning of clear Texts is neglected, while forced and Allegorical expoſitions are purſued.

5. When it is clearly proved that the majority of the Paſtors of the Church is Infallible, then we ſhall acknowledge that all Separation from them is ſimply unlawful: But till that is done we can no more think it a ſin, when in obedience to the Rules of the Goſpel we withdraw from ſuch falſe Teachers as corrupt it; Then it were for Common Subjects to refuſe to obey the Subordinate Magiſtrates when they clearly perceive that they have revolted from their duty to their Supream Authority. And ſince we are warned to beware of falſe Teachers, we know no other way to judge of them, but the comparing their Doctrine with that which is delivered to us in Scripture.

The

The Fourteenth Method

IS *for the Confirmation of the former: In order to which we muſt ask the* Calviniſts *upon all their Articles, that which* * *S.* Auſtin *asked of the* Donatiſts, *when the Church reconciled to her ſelf Hereticks that were penitent without re-baptizing them: For Example, Whether was the Church ſtill a True Church or not, when before the Schiſm was made, Jeſus Chriſt was adored in the Holy Euchariſt? If ſhe was the true Church, then none ought to have ſeparated from her for any practice that was authorized by her.* † If ſhe was not the true Church, from whence came *Calvin*, out of what ſoil did he grow, or out of what Sea was he caſt, or from which of the Heavens did he fall? *From whence are theſe Reformers come? From whom have they received their Doctrine, and the authority to Preach it?* * Let thoſe who follow them conſider well where they are, ſince they can mount no higher than to thoſe for their Original. For us we are ſecure in the Communion of that Church, in which that is to this day

* Si autem tunc non erat Eccleſia, quia Sacrilegi Heretici ſine baptiſmo recipiebantur, & hæc univerſali conſuetudine tenebatur, unde Donatus apparuit?

† De qua terrâ germinavit? De quo mari emerſit? De quo cœlo cecidit? *Lib.* 5. *de Bapt. cap.* 2.

* Ipſi conſiderent ubi ſint qui neque unde propagati ſint, poſſunt dicere. Sed nos in Eccleſiæ communione ſecuri ſumus,

per cujus univerſitatem id nunc agitur, quod & ante Agripinum, & inter Agripinum & Cyprianum, per ejus univerſitatem ſimiliter agebatur. *Ibid.*

uni-

univerſally practiſed that was alſo practiſed before *Agripinus*'s time, and alſo in the interval between *Cyprian* and *Agripinus*: *And afterwards he ſubjoyns theſe excellent words that are Deciſive*, * But neither did *Agripinus*, nor *Cyprian*, nor thoſe that have followed them, though they had opinions different from others, ſeparate themſelves from them, but remained in the Communion and Unity of the ſame Church with thoſe from whom they differed. *That is to ſay, they waited till the Church ſhould have decided the difference*; *and after he had reſumed a little of what he had formerly ſaid, he concludes thus*, † If then the Church was loſt for holding that the Baptiſm of Hereticks was good, they cannot ſhew the Original of their Communion. But if the true Church did ſtill ſubſiſt, they cannot juſtifie their Separation, nor the Schiſm that they have made. *One may ſay all this againſt the* Waldenſes, *the* Lutherans, *the* Calviniſts, *and the other Hereticks who cannot mount higher than to* Waldo, *to* Luther, *to* Calvin, *or their other Heads. This Method of S.* Auſtin's *is moſt excellent.*

* Et cujus univerſitatem neque Agripinus deſeruit, neque Cyprianus, neque illi qui iis conſenſerunt, quamvis aliter quàm cæteri ſaperent, ſed cum iis ipſis à quibus diverſa ſenſerunt, in eadem unitatis Communione manſerunt. *Ibid.*

† Quapropter ſi temporibus Cypriani perdidit Eccleſia Malorum Communionem, non habent iſti ſuæ communionis originem. Si autem non perdidit, non habent præciſionis ſuæ aliquam defenſionem. *Ibid. lib.* 3. *contra Donatiſtas de Baptiſmo.*

But if our Brethren, the pretended Reformed, will defend themſelves by ſaying, as in effect they do ſay in ſome of their Books, That it was not they who made the Separation, but rather that it came from us, and that we have cut them off from our Communion. To this it muſt be anſwered, That there are two ſorts of Separation, the one is Criminal, the other is Judicial. In the firſt, one ſeparates himſelf from his Paſtor by a manifeſt Diſobedience; in the ſecond, the Paſtor ſeparates him from the Flock who is making a party, and refuſes to ſubmit to the Orders of the Church. The one is a Sin, and the other is the Puniſhment. The one is a voluntary departure, the other is the being cut off by a Sentence, even as the Judge pronounces a Sentence of Condemnation againſt one that has killed himſelf.

The proof of thoſe two different Separations is to be found in the Thirty eighth Letter of S. Cyprians, *where he ſpeaks of one* Augendus, *who had gone over to the party of* Feliciſſimus *the Deacon, and it appears that that great Saint had ſuſpended and excommunicated him for having withdrawn himſelf from his Obedience, and for having engaged others in the ſame Separation.*

* Let

* Let every one, *ſays he*, that has followed his Opinions and Faction, know that he ſhall communicate no more with us in the Church, ſince of his own accord he has choſen to be ſeparated from the Church. *In his Seventy ſixth Epiſtle he ſays the ſame thing of* Novatian, *and thoſe who had joyned with him in his Revolt*; Becauſe they leaving the Church by their Rebellion, and breaking the Peace and Unity of Jeſus Chriſt, have endeavoured to eſtabliſh their authority, and to aſſume a Supreme Jurisdiction to themſelves, and to uſurp power to Baptize, and to offer Sacrifice.

* Interim cum Feliciſſimus communatus ſit non communicaturos in morte ſecum qui nobis obtemperaſſent, id eſt, qui nobis communicârint, accipiat Sententiam quam prior dixit, ut abſtentum ſe à nobis ſciat quiſquis ſe inſpirationi & factioni ejus ſe adjunxerit. Sciat ſe in Eccleſia nobiſcum non eſſe communicaturum, qui ſponte maluit ab Eccleſia ſeparari. *Cypr. Ep.* 38. Quod nunc hi Eccleſiam ſcindentes, & contra pacem atque unitatem Chriſti Rebelles, Cathedram ſibi conſtituere, & primatum aſſumere, & baptizandi atque offerendi licentiam vindicare conantur. *Idem Ep.* 76.

This Diſtinction is alſo clearly ſtated in the fourth Action of the Council of Chalcedon, *where thoſe two Ancient Canons of the Council of* Antioch *that were drawn out of Canons of the Apoſtles, were cited. The firſt is concerning thoſe that were ſeparated, the other is concerning thoſe who of their own accord did ſeparate themſelves. The* Greek *is* περὶ τῶν ἑαυτὸς ἀφοριζόντων.

* *Concil. Chal. Act.* 4. *Can.* 83. Si quis Episcopus à Synodo depositus, aut Presbyter, aut Diaconus, aut omnino qui est sub regulâ, à proprio Episcopo, ausus fuerit amplius aliquid Sacri Ministerii gerere, sive Episcopus juxta Superiorum consuetudinem, sive Presbyter, sive Diaconus, postea non liceat ei, ne in altera quidem Synodo, spem restitutionis nec satisfactionis locum habere: Sed & omnes qui ei communicent, ejiciantur ex Ecclesiâ, & maxime si postquam cognoverint sententiam in prædictos latam, iis communicare ausi fuerint. *Can.* 84. De iis qui seipsos separant, si quis Presbyter aut Diaconus contempto proprio Episcopo, se ab Ecclesiâ segregaverit, aut seorsim congregationem habuerit, & altare constituerit, si commonenti Episcopo non acquieverit, nec consentire vel obedire voluerit, semel & iterum, ac tertium vocanti, is omnino Deponatur, nec ultra remedium consequi, nec proprium honorem recipere possit: Quod si perseveraverit tumultuari & Ecclesiam perturbare, per potestatem externam tanquam seditiosus, corrigatur. *These two Canons were read and reported in the Fourth Action of the Council of* Chalcedon, *in the Process of those two Monks* Carose *and* Dorothee, *that had made a Schism, and having joyned themselves to* Eutyches, *did separate from the Church, as* Luther *and* Calvin, *and those who have followed them, have separated themselves in these latter Ages.*

* *It was thought proper for this purpose to transcribe here those two Canons, which are the fundamental Laws of the practice of the Church, with regard to Hereticks and Schismaticks whom she throws out of her bosome, and who have separated themselves from her.*

These Canons are the Fourth and Fifth of the Council of Antioch, *and the Twenty seventh and Thirtieth of the Apostolick Canons, and the pretended Reformed cannot reject their Authority, since they observe among themselves the same Discipline, when any particular persons, whether Ministers, or others of their Communion, will not submit to the Decisions of their Synods.*

Re-

Remarks.

1. FOr the firſt branch of this Method the Reformed are not at all concerned in it, for they do not deny the Church of *Rome* to be ſtill a True Church; and that her Baptiſm and Ordinations are valid, and that they are not to be repeated, and therefore though it was very pertinent to urge the *Donatiſts* as S. *Auſtin* did, who held that the Sacraments in an ill mans hands had no vertue at all, and that the Church had every where failed, ſo that there was no Church but that which was among them. Yet all this is foreign to the ſtate of the Controverſie between us and the Church of *Rome*, and we do freely acknowledge that in ſuch a matter as the Re-baptizing Hereticks, it had been a very great ſin to have broken Communion with the reſt of the Church.

2. Yet upon this very head P. *Stephen* did excommunicate S. *Cyprian*, who yet for all that did not depart from his former opinion or practice: So here was ſuch a Schiſm as they object to us, S. *Cyprian* thought the Re-baptizing Hereticks was well ground-

ed; *Stephen* thought otherwiſe, and did excommunicate him. If upon that a laſting Schiſm had followed in the Church, S. *Cyprian* might have been held the fountain of it by thoſe who condemned his opinion, but if his opinion was true he could be no Schiſmatick: So we deſire the grounds of our Separation may be examined: if they will not bear ſuch a Superſtructure, we confeſs we deſerve the ſevereſt cenſures poſſible; but if they are ſolid, then the guilt of the rent that is in the Church, muſt lie ſomewhere elſe than on us.

3. We do not deny but there are two ſorts of Separation which are here very well diſtinguiſhed; and without ſeeking for any proof in ſo clear a matter, We confeſs that when any ſeparates himſelf from the Church, upon any unjuſtifiable account, thoſe Canons, and the higheſt ſeverities of Church-cenſures ought to be applied to them: but all this is upon ſuppoſition that the departure is ill grounded, and therefore all thoſe Rules that have been laid down in general againſt Hereſie and Schiſm muſt ſtill ſuppoſe the Church to be pure and uncorrupted.

4. It is plain by theſe very Canons, how much that power of the Church may be and was abuſed. The Council of *Antioch*, being compoſed of the favourers of *Arius*, depoſed *Athanaſius*, and reſolved to ſilence him, and ſuch other Church-men as receiv'd the *Nicene* Doctrine, in ſuch a manner that they ſhould be no more able to withſtand their deſigns: And therefore they made thoſe Canons according to former cuſtomes, which in the ſtile of that Age was called the Canon or Rule (for none that has conſidered things, will believe that the Canons that are called Apoſtolical, were made by the Apoſtles) and their chief deſign was levelled againſt *Athanaſius* and the Orthodox party. But at that ſame time as the Orthodox in the Eaſt did not ſubmit to this, ſo neither did the Biſhops in the Weſt take any notice of it; and *Chryſoſtome*, who was bred up at *Antioch*, and ſo could not but know in what eſteem thoſe Canons were held, did not look on himſelf as bound by them, and made no account of them when they were objected to him. Thus, though in general theſe are good Rules, and ſuch as ought to be obeyed where the Synod or the Biſhop do not abuſe their power,

yet when the power of the Church is uſed not to *Edification* but to *Deſtruction*, then the obligation to obedience is not to be too far extended. And as in Laws that oblige Subjects to obey Inferiour Magiſtrates, a tacite exception is to be ſuppoſed, in caſe they ſhould become guilty of Treaſon, ſo there muſt be ſuppoſed likewiſe in this caſe the like exception, in caſe a Synod depoſes a Biſhop, or a Biſhop cenſures his Clergy, for aſſerting the true Faith. And as a Separation from an uncorrupted Church is a very great wickedneſs, ſo the ſeparating from a corrupted Church, in whoſe Communion we cannot continue without being polluted in it, is but a part of that care which we ought to have of our own Salvation.

The

The Fifteenth Method.

TO all the former Methods a Fifteenth may be added, by letting our P. Reformed ſee that many Articles are to be found in their Confeſſion of Faith, in their Catechiſms, in the Articles of their Diſcipline, in the Deciſions of their Synods, and in the Books of their Chief Miniſters who have writ upon the Controverſies; from which, Arguments may be drawn againſt them to prove the truth of our belief, even by their own Confeſſion: For Example, Their Diſcipline allows the Communion in one kind only, to ſuch as cannot drink Wine: From which one may infer that the Communion under both kinds is not an Article of neceſſity, and that they are in the wrong, to alledge that as they do, to be a lawful ground for their Separation.

The Miniſter Dailée, *and many others confeſs, that in the time of S.* Gregory Nazianzene, *S.* Chryſoſtome *and S.* Jerome, *the Invocation of Saints was received in the Church:* John Forbes *adds to this, That the Tradition of the Church was uniform concerning Prayer for the Dead: And ſince he denies that the Books of the* Maccabees *are Canonical, he ſays the*

the Scripture ſpeaks nothing of it. But without engaging into the difficulty concerning the Books of the Maccabees, *in which they have no more reaſon on their ſide, than in the reſt; It is eaſie to conclude from their own principles, that it was no ways to be allowed to ſeparate themſelves for matters, that according to themſelves, were eſtabliſhed by ſo great an authority, and ſo conſtant an union of all Ages.*

Remarks.

1. IT is not an equal way of proceeding, to object to the Proteſtants what ſome particular Writers have ſaid, or to ſtrain Inferences too far, at a time when the Celebrated Book of the Biſhop of *Meaux* is in ſuch high eſteem. The chief deſign of which is to ſet aſide all the Indiſcretions of particular Writers, and to put the beſt colours on things that is poſſible. Now Tradition being of ſuch authority among them, whatſoever paſſes down through many of their approved Writers, has a much greater ſtrength againſt them, than it can be pretended to have againſt us: And therefore though particular Writers or whole Synods ſhould

ſhould have written or decreed any thing againſt the common Doctrines of the Reformed, they ought not to object that to us: If they will allow us the ſame Liberties that they aſſume to themſelves.

2. It is not a conſequence becoming ſo great an Aſſembly to infer, that becauſe in ſome few extraordinary caſes the general rule of Gods deſiring *Mercy* and not *Sacrifice* is carried ſo far, as to give weak perſons ſo much of the Sacrament as they can receive, and not to deny that to them becauſe a natural averſion makes them incapable of receiving the Wine: That therefore a Church may, in oppoſition to Chriſts expreſs command, *Drink you all of it*, and the conſtant practice of Thirteen Centuries take this away. It is not of neceſſity for Salvation that every one drinks the Cup, but it is of neceſſity to the purity of a Church that ſhe ſhould obſerve our Saviour's Precepts.

3. It is confeſſed that ſome Fathers uſed the Invocation of Saints; yet that being but a matter of fact, it is of no conſequence for the Deciſion of any point of Doctrine: For we found our Doctrine only on the Word of God, and

and not on the practices of Men, how eminent soever they might otherwise be. But in relation to these Fathers, these things are to be observed, 1. They lived in the end of the Fourth Century: So this is no competent proof for an Oral Tradition, or conveyance of this Doctrine down from the Apostles days. 2. Figures and bold Discourses in Panegyricks are rather to be considered as raptures and flights of warm affections, than as composed and serious devotions. Therefore such Addresses as occur in their Funeral Orations, are rather high strains of a daring Rhetorick, than Instructions for others, since in their expositions on Scripture, or other Treatises of Devotion, they do not handle these things by way of Direction or Advice.

John Forbes is mis-cited for *William Forbes*, Bishop of *Edenburgh*: *John* was not of such yielding Principles. It is true, *William* though he was a man Eminently Learned, and of a most Exemplary Life, yet he was possessed with that same weakness, under which *Grotius*, and some other great men have laboured, of thinking that a Reconciliation with the Church of *Rome* might be obtained by an accommodation

tion on both ſides; and this flowing in him from an excellent temper of Soul, he is to be excuſed if that carried him in many things too far: But he is a Writer that has been taxed by all men, as one that had particular Notions. And we may object *Eraſmus* to thoſe of the Church of *Rome*, as well as they may argue againſt us from Biſhop *Forbes*.

5. If the Church of *Rome* uſed only a General Commemoration of the Dead, with wiſhes for the compleating their happineſs by a ſpeedy reſurrection, and went no further, we might perhaps differ in opinion with them about the fitneſs of this, but we would not break Communion with them for it. But when they have ſet up ſuch a Merchandize in the Houſe of God, for Redeeming Souls out of Purgatory, and ſaying Maſſes for them; this is that we except to, as a diſgracing of the Chriſtian Religion, and as a high profanation of the Holy Sacrament. And it is plain that the Fathers conſidered the Commemoration of the Dead rather as a reſpect done to their Memory, and an honourable remembrance of them, than as a thing that was any way uſeful to them in the other ſtate; which may appear by this

Ep. 34. this ſingle Inſtance: S. *Cyprian* was ſo much offended at a Presbyter, when it appeared after his death that he had left another Presbyter Guardian of his Children; that he gave order that no mention ſhould be made of him in the Commemoration of the Dead that was uſed in the Holy Euchariſt; becauſe, by the *Roman* Law, ſuch as were left Guardians were under ſome obligations to undertake the truſt: And that Saint thought ſuch a truſt might prove ſo great a diſtraction to a man that was dedicated to the Holy Miniſtry, that no Honour ought to be done to the Memory of him that had ſo left it by his Will. Certainly if that Commemoration was believed to be of any advantage to the Dead, this had been an unreaſonable piece of Cruelty in him to deny a Presbyter that comfort for ſo ſmall a fault: And therefore we may well infer from hence, that by this Remembrance, and the Thankſgivings they offered to God for ſuch as had died in the Faith, they intended only ſo far to celebrate their Memories as to encourage others to imitate thoſe Patterns they had ſet them.

6. I ſhall not engage in any Diſpute concerning the Canonicalneſs of the Books of the *Maccabees*, only as this general prejudice lies againſt all the Books called *Apocryphal*, that the Council at *Laodicea*, which was the firſt that reckoned up the Canon of the Scripture, does not name them: So as to the Book of the *Maccabees*, it is hard to imagine that one who profeſſes that he was but an Abridger of *Jaſon*'s Five Books, and gives us a large account of the difference between a Copious Hiſtory and an Abridgement, could be an Inſpired Writer.

The

The Sixteenth Method.

TO *Conclude, one may ſolidly confute our Innovators by the Contradiction that is in their Articles of Faith, ſhewing them the Changes that they have made in the* Ausburg *Confeſſion, as alſo in all the different Expoſitions of their Faith which they have received and authorized ſince that time; which ſhews that their Faith being uncertain* * *and wavering, cannot have the Character of Divine Revelation, which is certain and conſtant.* There is nothing but the Faith that admits of no Reformation.

Tertullian *made uſe of this Argument in many of his Books, and* Hilary *handles it excellently well againſt the Emperour* Conſtantius, *upon the occaſion of the new Symbols, which the* Arians *publiſhed every day, changing their Faith continually, while the Catholick Church continued firm to that of* Nice.

One may likewiſe uſe another Method, which is to make it appear that there is a Conformity between the Roman *and* Greek *Churches, in the chief Articles of Faith, that are in diſpute between us and the P. Reformed, and that in theſe the* Roman *Church does likewiſe agree with thoſe Societies*

* Regula quidem fidei una omnino eſt, ſola immobilis & irreformabilis, cætera jam diſciplinæ & converſationis admittunt novitatem. *Tertull. de Virg. vel. c.* 1. *lib.* 1. *adverſus Marc. c.* 21. *and almoſt in his whole Book of Preſcriptions.*

cieties which ſeparated themſelves from the Church, for Errours which the P. Reformed condemn with her, ſuch as the Neſtorians *and* Eutychians.

To theſe Methods it will be neceſſary to add particular Conferences, ſolid Writings, Sermons and Miſſions, and to uſe all theſe means with a Spirit of Charity, without bitterneſs, and above all, without injuries. Remembring that excellent ſaying of S. Auſtin's, * I do not endeavour to reproach thoſe againſt whom I diſpute, that I may ſeem to have the better of them, but that I may become founder by convincing them of their Errour. *And following the Canon of the Council of* Africk, *that appointed that though the* Donatiſts *were cut off from the Church of God by their Schiſm, yet they ſhould be gently dealt with, that ſo correcting them with meekneſs, as the Apoſtle ſays, God may give them the grace of Repentance to know the truth, and to retire themſelves out of the ſnare of the Devil in which they are taken Captives.*

* Non ago ut efficiar homini convitiando ſuperior, ſed errorem convincendo ſalubrior.

Remarks.

1. IF we did pretend that the firſt Reformers, or thoſe who drew the *Ausburg* confeſſion were inſpired of God, in compiling what they writ there were ſome force in this Diſcourſe: But ſince we build upon this principle, that the Scripture is the only ground on which we found our Faith, then if any perſon, how much ſoever we may honour his memory on all other accounts, has miſunderſtood that, we do not depart from our principle when we forſake him, and follow that which appears to be plainly delivered in the Scriptures.

2. We freely acknowledge that the *Faith admits of no Reformation*, and that we can make neither more nor leſs of it than we find in the Scriptures; but if any Church has brought in many Errours, we do not think it a Reforming the Faith, to throw theſe out. The Faith is ſtill the ſame that it was when the Apoſtles firſt delivered it to the Church; nor was it the Faith, but the Church that was pretended to be Reformed: And if after a long night of Darkneſs and Corruption, thoſe that

that began to ſee better, did not at firſt diſcover every thing, or if ſome of the prejudices of their Education, and their former opinions did ſtill hang about them; ſo that others who came after them ſaw further and more clearly: This only proves that they were ſubject to the Infirmities of the Humane Nature, and that they were not immediately inſpired of God, which was never pretended.

3. Great difference is to be made between Articles of Faith and Theological Truths. The former conſiſts of thoſe things that are the Ingredients of our Baptiſmal Vows, and are indeed parts of the New Covenant, which may be reduced to the Creed and the Ten Commandments. The other are opinions relating to theſe, which though they are founded on Scripture, yet have not that Influence either on our Hearts or Lives, that they make us either much better or much worſe. Among theſe we reckon the Explanation of the Preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament, and the Influence of the Divine Grace upon our Wills. If ſome of the Confeſſions of Faith among the Proteſtants differ much in theſe matters, that is not concerning Articles of Faith, but

Theological Truths: In which great allowances are to be made for difference of opinion. And as particular Churches ought not to proceed too haſtily to deciſions in matters that are juſtly diſputable, ſo the rigorous impoſing of thoſe ſevere definitions on the Conſciences of others by Oaths and Subſcriptions, and more particularly all rigour in the proſecution of thoſe that differ in opinion, is both diſagreeing to the mildneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, and to the Character of Church men; and in particular, to the principles upon which the Reformation was founded.

4. As for the *Greek* Churches, together with the other Societies in the Eaſt, we do not deny that many of thoſe corruptions for which we condemn the Church of *Rome*, are among them, which only proves that the beginning of theſe is elder than the Ninth or Tenth Century: In which thoſe Churches began to divide, ſuch is the worſhipping of Images, the praying to Saints, and ſome other abuſes.

5. To this it muſt be added, that for diverſe Ages the oppreſſion under which thoſe Churches have fallen, and the great Ignorance that has overſpread them, have been ſuch, that no wonder if

if thoſe *Greeks* that have been bred up in the States of the *Roman* Communion, and ſo were leavened with their opinions, have found it no hard task to impoſe upon their weak and corrupt Countrey-men, whatſoever opinions they had in charge to infuſe into them: So that we may rather wonder to find that all thoſe abuſes for which we complain of the Church of *Rome* are not among them, than that ſome have got footing there.

6. But after all this, the main things upon which we have ſeparated from the Church of *Rome*, are not to be found among thoſe Churches: Such as the adoring the Conſecrated Elements, the denying the Wine to the People, the ſaying Maſſes for Redeeming Souls out of Purgatory, the having Images for the Trinity, the immediate Invocation of Saints for the pardon of Sin, and thoſe bleſſings which we receive only from God: Beſides an infinite variety of other things. Not to mention their denying the Popes authority. And to turn this argument on them, Thoſe parts of their Worſhip, in which they differ ſo much from the Eaſtern Churches, do afford us very good arguments to evince that they are Innovations,

brought in ſince theſe ages, in which thoſe Churches held Communion with the *Roman* Church: And do prove that at the time of their Separation they were not introduced in the Weſtern Church: For when we find ſuch a keenneſs of diſpute concerning one of the moſt indifferent things in the World, as whether the Sacrament ſhould be of Leavened or Unleavened Bread; can we think that if the *Latines* had then worſhipped the Sacrament, they had not much rather have objected to the *Greeks* their Irreverence upon ſo high an occaſion, than have inſiſted on the matter of unleavened Bread?

As for the concluſion, we do acknowledge it is ſuch as becomes an Aſſembly of Biſhops. But whether it becomes men of their Characters, of their Birth and of their Qualities, to pretend to ſuch gentleneſs and meekneſs, when all the World ſees ſuch notorious proofs given to the contrary, I ſhall not determine; but will leave it to their own ſecond thoughts to conſider better of it. We find both the King and the Clergy of *France*, expreſſing great tenderneſs towards the perſons of thoſe they call Hereticks, together with their

their reſolutions of gaining them only by the Methods of Perſuaſion and Charity, and yet the contrary is practiſed in ſo many parts of *France*, that conſidering the exact Obedience that the Inferiour Officers pay to the Orders that are ſent them from the Court, we muſt conclude theſe Orders are procured from the King, without his being rightly informed concerning them: And ſince we muſt either doubt of the ſincerity of the Kings Declarations or of the Aſſemblies, we hope they will not take it ill, if we pay that Reverence to a Crowned Head, and to ſo illuſtrious a Monarch, as to prefer him in the competition between his credit and theirs; and they muſt forgive us if we ſtand in ſome doubt of the ſincerity of this Declaration, till we are convinced of it by more Infallible proofs than words or general Proteſtations.

The Concluſion.

THus I have made ſuch Remarks on theſe Methods as ſeem both juſt and ſolid: I have advanced no aſſertion either of Fact or Right concerning which I am not well aſſured, and which I cannot juſtifie by a much larger ſeries of proofs than I thought fit to bring into a Diſcourſe, which I intended ſhould be as ſhort as was poſſible. But if that be neceſſary, and I am called on to do it, I ſhall not decline it. I have with great care avoided the ſaying any thing meerly for contentions ſake, or to make up a Muſter of many particulars; for I look on that way in which many write for a cauſe, as ſome Advocates plead for their Clients, by alledging every thing that may make a ſhew, or biaſs an unwary hearer, as very unbecoming the profeſſion of a Divine, and the cauſe of Truth which we ought to aſſert: And there is ſcarce any thing that ſhews a man is perſuaded of the truth he maintains, more evidently than a ſincere way of defending it: For great ſubtilties and deep

deep fetches do naturally incline a Reader to ſuſpect that the Writer was conſcious to himſelf of the weakneſs of his cauſe, and was therefore reſolved to ſupply thoſe defects by the quickneſs and nimbleneſs of his parts.

But having now ſaid what I think ſufficient in the way of Remarks upon the Letter, and the Methods publiſhed by the late Aſſembly General of the Clergy of *France*; I now go on to ſome Methods which ſeem ſtrong and well grounded for convincing thoſe in Communion with the Church of *Rome*, that they ought to ſuſpect the ground they ſtand on. In which I ſhall obſerve this Method: Firſt, I ſhall offer ſuch grounds of juſt ſuſpicion and jealouſie, as may diſpoſe every conſidering man to fear and apprehend that their Church is on a wrong bottom; from which I ſhall draw no other Inferences, but that they are reaſonable grounds to take a man a little off from the engagement of his former Education and Principles, and may diſpoſe him to examine matters in diſpute among us with more application and leſs partiality: And then I ſhall ſhew upon more demonſtrative grounds how falſe the foundations are, on which the Church of *Rome* is eſtabliſhed,

ed, both which I ſhall examine only in a general view, and in bulk, without deſcending by retail unto the particulars in Controverſie between us.

1. And firſt, It is a juſt ground to ſuſpect any Church or Party of men, that pretend to have every thing paſs upon their word or authority; and that endeavour to keep thoſe who adhere to them in all the Ignorance poſſible; that divert them from making Enquiries into Religion, and do with great earneſtneſs infuſe in them an Implicite Belief of whatſoever they ſhall propoſe or dictate to them. The World has found by experience that there is nothing in which fraud and artifices have been more employed than in matters of Religion: And that Prieſts have been often guilty of the baſeſt impoſtures. And therefore it is a ſhrewd Indication that any ſort of them that make this the firſt and grand principle which they infuſe into their followers, that they ought to believe every thing that the majority of themſelves decree, and do therefore recommend Ignorance and Implicite Obedience to their people, and keep the Scriptures out of their hands all they can, and wrap up their Worſhip in

in a language not underſtood by the vulgar, are not to be too eaſily believed: But that they may be juſtly ſuſpected of having no ſincere deſigns, ſince Truth is of the nature of Light: And Religion was ſent into the World to enlighten our minds, and to raiſe our underſtandings.

2. It is a juſt ground of Jealouſie of any Church, if the holds many opinions which have a mighty tendency to raiſe the Empire and Dominion of the Clergy to a vaſt height. A Reverence to them for their works ſake is due by the light of Nature: But if Prieſts advance this further to ſuch a pitch that every one of them is believed qualified by his Character to work the greateſt Miracle that ever was: The change of the Elements of Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Chriſt, beſides all the other Conſecrations, by which Divine Vertues are brought down on ſuch things as they bleſs: If it is alſo believed neceſſary to enumerate all ſecret ſins to them; and if their Abſolution is thought to have any other Vertue in it, than a giving the Peace of the Church, with a Declaration of the terms upon which God pardons Sinners: If the Vertue of the Sacraments,

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upon which ſo much depends, according to their principles, is ſo entirely in the Prieſts power, that he can defeat it when he pleaſes with a croſs intention; ſo that all mens hopes of another ſtate ſhall depend on the Prieſts good diſpoſition to them, by which every man muſt know how neceſſary it is to purchaſe their favour at any rate: If likewiſe they pretend to an Immunity from the Secular Judge; and do all enter into Oaths which center in him whom they acknowledge their Common Head, whoſe authority they have advanced above all the powers on Earth, ſo that he can depoſe Princes and give away his Dominions to others: It muſt be confeſſed that all theſe have ſuch Characters of Intereſt and Ambition on them, and are ſo little like the true Spirit of Chriſtianity, or indeed the Common Principles of Natural Reaſon and Religion, that a man is very partial who does not think it reaſonable to ſuſpect ſuch proceedings, and a Church that holds ſuch Doctrines.

3. It is likewiſe reaſonable to ſuſpect any Church that holds many opinions that tend much to a vaſt encreaſe of their Wealth, and to bring the greateſt Treaſures of the World into their hands.

hands. The power of redeeming Souls out of Purgatory has brought more Wealth into the Church of *Rome*, than the diſcovery of the *Indies* has done to the Crown of *Spain*. Such alſo was the power of Pardoning, and of exchanging Penances for Money, by which the World knew the price of Sins, and the rates at which they were to be compounded for. The Popes power of granting Indulgences, the vertue of Pilgrimages, the communication of the merits of Orders to ſuch as put on their Habits; and in a word, the whole authority that the Court of *Rome* has aſſumed in theſe latter ages, that tend ſo much to the encreaſe of their Revenue, are all ſuch evident Indications of particular ends and private deſigns, that he muſt be very much wedded to his firſt impreſſions, that does not upon this ſuſpect that matters have not been ſo fairly carried among them, that nothing ought to be doubted which is defined by them.

4. It is a very juſt cauſe of ſuſpecting every thing that is managed by a company of Prieſts, if they have for ſeveral Ages carried on their deſigns by the fouleſt methods of Forgery and Impoſture; of which they themſelves are

are now both convinced and ashamed. When the Popes authority was built on a pretended Collection of the Letters, which the Popes of the first ages after Christ were said to have writ; and their assumed Jurisdiction was justified by those precedents which are now by themselves acknowledged to be forgeries. When the Popes Temporal Dominion was grounded on the Donations of *Constantine*, of *Charles* the Great, and his Son *Lewis* the Good, which appear now to be notorious forgeries: When an infinite number of Saints, of Miracles, Visions, and other wonderful things were not only read and preached to the people, but likewise were put into the Collects and Hymns used on their Festivals, which wrought much on the simplicity and superstition of the vulgar; many of which are now proved to be such gross impostures, that they are forced to dash them out of their Offices, and others against which there lyes not such positive proof, yet depend on the credit only of some Legend, writ by some Monks. When many Books past over the World as the Writings of the most Ancient Fathers which were but lately writ, and many of their genuine Writings

tings were groſsly vitiated. When all thoſe things are become ſo evident, that the moſt Learned Writers amongſt themſelves, particularly in the *Gallican* Church, have not only yielded to the proofs brought by Proteſtant Writers in many of theſe particulars, but have with a very Commendable Zeal and Sincerity, made diſcoveries themſelves in ſeveral particulars, into which the others had not ſuch advantages to penetrate. There is upon all theſe grounds, good cauſe given to miſtruſt them in other things, and it is very reaſonable to examine the aſſertions of that Church with the ſevereſt rigour, ſince an Impoſture once diſcovered, ought to bring a ſuſpicion on all concerned in it, even as to all other things.

5. There is likewiſe great reaſon to ſuſpect all that are extream fierce and violent; that cannot endure the leaſt contradiction, but endeavour the ruine of all that oppoſe them. Truth makes men both confident of its force, and merciful towards ſuch as do not yet receive it: Whereas Errour is Jealous and Cruel. If then a Church has decreed that all Hereticks, that is, ſuch as do not ſubmit to all her deciſions are to be *extirpated*; if ſhe has bound all her

her Biſhops by Oath at their Ordinations to *Perſecute them to the utmoſt of their power.* If Princes that do not extirpate them, are firſt to be excommunicated by their Biſhops, and after a years Contumacy, are to be depoſed by the Popes, and their Kingdomes to be given away. If all Hereticks upon Obſtinacy or Relapſe are to be burnt; and if they endeavour in all places as much as they can, to erect Courts of Inquiſition with an abſolute authority, in which Church-men, forgetting their Character, have vied in Inventions of Torture and Cruelty with the bloodieſt Tyrants that have ever been: Then it muſt be confeſſed, that all theſe ſet together preſent the Church that authorizes and practiſes them with ſo dreadful an aſpect, ſo contrary to thoſe bowels and tenderneſſes that are in the nature of man: Not to mention the merciful Idea's of God, and the wonderful meekneſs of the Author of our Holy Religion; that we muſt conclude that under what form ſoever of Religion ſuch things are ſet on foot in the World, ſuch a Doctrine is ſo far from improving and exalting the nature of man, that really it makes him worſe than he would otherwiſe be, if he were left

See the Oath in *Pontif. Rom.*

left to the ſoftneſs of his own nature: And certainly it were better there were no revealed Religion in the World, than that mankind ſhould become worſe, more cruel, and more barbarous by its means, than it would be if it were governed by Nature or a little Philoſophy.

Upon all theſe grounds laid together, it is no unreaſonable thing to conclude, that a Church liable to ſuch imputations ought juſtly to be ſuſpected, and that every one in it ought to examine well on what grounds he continues in the Communion of a ſociety of men, againſt which ſuch ſtrong prejudices lie ſo fairly, without the leaſt ſtraining or aggravating matters too much.

I proceed now to the ſecond part of my undertaking, which is to ſhew, that the grounds upon which that Church builds, are certainly weak if not falſe. And

1. They boaſt much of a Conſtant Succeſſion, as the only infallible mark to judge of a Church, and as that without which we can never be certain of the Faith. But if this is true, then into what deſperate ſcruples muſt all men fall? For the reſolution of their Faith turns to that which can never be ſo

much as made probable, much leſs certain. The efficacy of the Sacraments depending on the intention of the Prieſt, none can know who are truly Baptized or Ordained, and who are not: And it is not to be much doubted but that many profane Prieſts may have, in a ſort of wanton Malice, put their Intention on purpoſe croſs to the Sacrament: For the Impiety of an Atheiſtical Church-man is the moſt extravagant thing in the World. Beſide this, what Evidence can they give of the Canonical Ordination of all the Biſhops of *Rome*? The firſt Links of that Chain are ſo entangled, that it is no ſmall difficulty to find out who firſt ſucceeded the Apoſtles: And it is not certainly known who ſuceeeded them afterwards; for ſome few Catalogues gathered up perhaps from report by Hiſtorians, is not ſo much as of the nature of a *Violent preſumption.* If we conſider Succeſſion only as a matter of Order, in which we go on without Scrupuloſity, I confeſs there is enough to ſatisfie a reaſonable man: But if we think it indiſpenſable both for the conveyance of the Faith, and the vertue of the Sacraments, then it is impoſſible to have any certainty of Faith; all muſt be

be ſounded on conjecture or probability at moſt. It is but of late that formal Inſtruments were made of Ordinations, or that thoſe were carefully preſerved and tranſmitted. In a word, difficulties can be rationally enough propoſed concerning Succeſſion, that muſt needs drive one that ſets up his Faith on it to endleſs ſcruples, of which it is impoſſible he ſhould be ever ſatisfied.

There is one thing of great conſequence in this matter, that deſerves to be well conſidered: Under the *Moſaical* Law God limited the Succeſſion to the High Prieſthood, ſo that the firſt-born was to ſucceed; and the great Annual Expiation for the whole people was to be performed by him. Yet when in our Saviours time this was ſo interrupted, that the High Prieſthood was become Annual, and wasſold for money, God would not ſuffer the people to periſh for want of ſuch Expiation; but the Sacrifice was ſtill accepted, though offered up by a Mercenary Intruder: And *Caiaphas* in the year of his High Prieſthood propheſied: So that how great ſoever the ſin of the High Prieſt was, the people were ſtill ſafe in him that was actually in that Office. And if this was obſerved in a diſ-

penſation that was chiefly made up of poſitive Precepts and carnal Ordinances, it is much more reaſonable to expect it in a Religion that is more free from ſuch obſervances, and is more Spiritual and Internal.

2. Another ground on which thoſe of the *Roman* Church build is this, That a True Church muſt hold the truth in all things: Which is ſo Sophiſtical a thing, that it might have been expected wiſe and ingenious men ſhould have been long ago aſhamed of it.

It is certain the *Jewiſh* Church was the true Church of God in our Saviours time, for their Sacrifices had then an Expiatory Vertue in them: So that they had the certain means of Salvation among them; which is the formal notion of a True Church: And yet in ſo great a point as what their *Meſſias* and his Kingdome were to be, we find they were in a very fatal errour. The opinion of his being to be a Temporal Prince had been handed down among them ſo by Oral Tradition, that it had run through them all, from the Prieſts down to the Fiſher-men: For we find the Apoſtles ſo poſſeſſed with it, that at the very time of Chriſts Aſcenſion, they

they were ſtill dreaming of it: And yet this was a groſs Errour, and proved of moſt miſchievous conſequence to them: Of this they were ſo perſuaded, that the Supream Judicature or Repreſentative of their Church, the *Sanhedrim*, that had much more to ſhew for its authority, than a General Council can ſhew in the New Teſtament, erred in this fundamental point, and condemned Chriſt as a Blaſphemer, and declared him guilty of Death. So that while they continued to be the True Church of God, yet they erred in the point which was of all others the moſt important; upon which it is evident, that it is no good Inference to conclude, that becauſe a Church is a True Church, therefore it cannot be in an Errour.

See Deut. 17. from 8, to 14.

3. Another pretence in that Church, on which they build much, and which makes great Impreſſion on many weak minds, is the Churches Infallibility in deciding Controverſies, by which all diſputes can be ſoon ended, and they conclude that Chriſt had dealt ill with his Church, if he had not provided ſuch a Method for the end of all Diſputes.

But it is certain they have loſt this Infallibility if they ever had it, unleſs it be acknowledged that it is lodged in the Pope; againſt which the *Gallican* Clergy has ſo lately declared: And yet it can be no where elſe, if it is not in him; for as they have had no General Council for about one hundred and twenty years, ſo they cannot have one but by the Popes Summons; and if the Pope is averſe, they cannot find this Infallibility: ſo at beſt it is but a Dormant Priviledge, which Popes can ſuſpend at pleaſure. In the Intervals of Councils where is it? Muſt one go over *Europe*, and poll all the Biſhops and Divines to find their Opinions? So in a word, after all the noiſe about Infallibility, they can only pretend to have it at the Popes Mercy: And indeed he that can believe a Pope, choſen as he generally is, by Intrigues and Court factions, to be the Infallible Judge of Controverſies; or that a Council managed by all the Artifices of crafty men, (as that at *Trent* appears to have been, even by Cardinal *Pallavicini*'s Hiſtory) was Infallibly directed by the Holy Ghoſt, is well prepared to believe the only thing in the World that is more

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Incredible, which is Tranſubſtantiation.

There was as good reaſon for lodging an Infallible Authority among the *Jews* as among Chriſtians; for their Religion conſiſting of ſo many External Precepts concerning which Diſputes might riſe, it ſeemed more neceſſary that ſuch an authority ſhould have been eſtabliſhed among them, than under a Diſpenſation infinitely more plain and ſimple. And the Supream Authority was lodged with the *Sanhedrim* in much higher expreſſions under the Old Teſtament than can be pretended under the New, as will appear to any that will read the fore cited place in *Deuteronomy*. There was alſo a Divine Inſpiration lodged in the *Pectoral*, by which the High Prieſt had immediate Anſwers from the Cloud of Glory; and when that ceaſed under the Second Temple, yet, as their Writers tell us, that was ſupplyed by a degree of Prophecy; which is alſo confirmed by what S. *John* ſays concerning *Caiaphas*'s Prophecying; and yet after all this, that Infallibility was not ſo obſtinately lodged with them, that a company of lewd and wicked Prieſts could not miſ-lead the people, as

they did in the Doctrine concerning the *Messias*. From all which it may be well inferred, that how large soever the meaning of those disputed passages that relate to the authority of the Church may be supposed to be, yet a tacite condition must be still implyed in them, That while Church-men continue pure and sincere, and seek the truth in the methods prescribed by the Gospel, they shall not err in any point of Salvation. And it is not reasonable to expect that our Saviour should have left a more effectual provision against Errour than he has done against Sin; since the latter is certainly more pernicious and destructive of those ends for which he came into the World: So that as he has only left sufficient means for those who use them well to keep themselves from Sin, in such a manner that they shall not perish in it; so has he likewise provided a sufficient security against Errour, when such means of Instruction are offered that every one who applies himself to the due use of them, shall not err damnably.

4. Another foundation on which they build is Oral Tradition, which they reckon was handed down in eve-

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ry Age ſince the Apoſtles days. This ſome explain ſo as to make it only the conveyance of the Expoſition of the Scriptures, though others ſtretch it further, as if it might carry down Truths not mentioned in Scripture: And for finding this out two Methods are given: The one is Preſumptive, when from the Doctrine of the Church in any one age, it is preſumed from thence, that thoſe of that age had it from the former, and the former from thoſe who went before them, till we run it up to the Apoſtles days.

The other Method is of particular proof, when the conveyance in every age appears from the chief Writers in it. I ſhall not here run out to ſhew upon either of theſe hypotheſes, the unfitneſs of this way of conveying Doctrines, nor the eaſie door it opens to fraud and impoſture; but ſhall only ſhew that they cannot prove they have a competent Evidence of Oral Tradition among them.

And firſt, it is certain that we have not handed down to us a general expoſition of the Scriptures, and that almoſt all the Ancient Expoſitors run after Allegories, according to the way of the *Greek* Philoſophers: For ſome whole ages

ages we have not above two or three Writers, and thoſe lived very remote; and what they ſay, chiefly in the paſſages that are made uſe of in the later Diſputes, fall in oft on the by, and ſeem rather to have dropt from them, than to have been intended by them; ſo that this cannot be thought deciſive. And when it is likewiſe confeſſed, that in their Diſputes with the Hereticks of their days, they have not argued ſo critically from thoſe places of Scripture, which they conſidered more narrowly: It will not be reaſonable to conclude too poſitively upon thoſe things that rather fell in their way occaſionally, than were the deſigned ſubjects of their enquiries. So that it is not poſſible to prove an Oral Tradition by the Inſtances of particular Writers, in all the ages and corners of the Church: For almoſt an age and a half we have not one copious *Latine* Writer but *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, that both lived in *Carthage*: And it is not very clear of what perſuaſion the former was when he wrote the greateſt part of his Treatiſes: That he was a Heretick when he wrote ſome of them is paſt diſpute: Now can one think that if God had intended that the Faith

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ſhould have paſſed down by ſuch a conveyance, there would have been ſuch uncertain prints left us by which we might trace it out?

As for the other Method of Preſumption or Preſcription, it is certainly a falſe one; for if in any one particular it can be made appear that the Doctrine of the *Latin* Church has been in theſe latter ages contradictory to that of the primitive times, then this of Preſcription is never to be any more alledged; and of this I ſhall give two Inſtances that ſeem demonſtrative. The firſt is about the worſhipping departed Saints or Martyrs, which has been the practice of the *Latin* Church for ſeveral ages: And yet in the ſecond Century we have the greateſt evidence poſſible that it was not the Doctrine of that age; and that not in any occaſional word let fall by ſome ſingle Writer, but in a Letter writ by the Church of *Smyrna*, concerning the Martyrdom of their late Biſhip S. *Polycarp*: In which there appears that warm affection for his perſon, and honour for his memory, that we cannot think they would have been wanting in any ſort of reſpect that was due to the aſhes of ſo great a Saint.

And

And what they ſay to this purpoſe is deliberately brought out; for it being ſuggeſted by the *Jew* that had ſet on the Heathens againſt that Martyr, that it was neceſſary to deſtroy his Body, leſt the Chriſtians ſhould worſhip him; They reject that imputation in theſe words: *They being Ignorant*, ſay they, *that we can never forſake Chriſt who died for the ſalvation of the World, nor worſhip any other, for we adore him as the Son of God. But for the Martyrs, we do worthily love them, as the Diſciples and Followers of our Lord, for their unconquered love to their King and Maſter, and therefore deſire to be their Partners and Diſciples.*

To this I ſhall add another Inſtance that is no leſs evident, which is concerning the preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament. The Tradition of the Church can be beſt gathered from the Liturgies, which are the publickeſt, the moſt united and moſt ſolemn way in which ſhe expreſſes her ſelf. In S. *Ambroſe*'s time, or whoſoever elſe was the Author of the Book of the Sacraments that goes under his name, we find that the Prayer of Conſecrations, as it is cited by him, differs in a very eſſential point from that

Ambroſ. lib. 4. de Sacram. c. 5. Fac nobis hanc oblationem aſcriptam, rationabilem, acceptabilem, quod eſt figura corporis & ſanguinis Domini noſtri Jeſu Chriſti qui pridie quam pateretur, &c.

that which is now in the Canon of the Maſs: In the former they called the Sacrifice that they offered up in it, the *figure of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*; but ſince that time they have changed that phraſe, and inſtead of it they pray, that *It may be to us the Body and Blood of Chriſt.* We cannot tell in what age this change was made, but we may certainly conclude that the *Latin* Church in S. *Ambroſe*'s time, had a very different opinion concerning the preſence of Chriſt, from that which is now received among them; and that then ſhe only believed a Figurative Preſence. And thus it is certain that the Preſumptive Method for finding out Oral Tradition is a falſe one, and that the particular proof of Tradition by enquiring into the Doctrine of every age is impoſſible to be made.

The ſame Prayer is thus varied in the Canon of the Maſs. Quam oblationem tu Deus in omnibus quæſumus benedictam, aſcriptam, ratam, rationabilem acceptabilemque facere digneris, ut nobis corpus & ſanguis fiat dilectiſſimi filii tui Domini noſtri Jeſu Chriſti.

5. I ſhall enlarge a little further upon one particular Inſtance, which is concerning one of thoſe propoſitions lately condemned by the *Aſſembly General*: In which I intend to ſhew that they have departed from the Tradition of the Church, much more evidently than they can pretend that we have done: And this is concerning the Popes power of Depoſing Kings, which they who

who live under ſo mighty a Monarch have very prudently renounced: But whether they have not more plainly contradicted the Tradition of the Church than the Reformers did, ſhall appear by the ſequel of this Diſcourſe.

In order to which I ſhall lay down two grounds that ſeem undeniable in their own principles; The one is, That the Tradition of any Age or Ages of the Church, when it is univerſal and undiſputed, is of the ſame authority with the Tradition of any other Age whatſoever: For the promiſes made to the Church laſt continually, and have the ſame force at all times: And therefore a Tradition for theſe laſt ſix hundred years is of as ſtrong an authority as was that of the firſt ſix Ages.

The ſecond is, That a Tradition concerning the meaſures of mens Obedience and actions, is of the ſame authority with a Tradition concerning the meaſures of their Belief. The one ſort are practical, and the other are ſpeculative points; and as more are concerned in a practical truth than in a ſpeculative point, ſo it has greater effects and more influence on the World; therefore it is as neceſſary

neceſſary that theſe be certainly handed down as the other: And by conſequence a Tradition concerning any Rule of Life is as much to be received as that concerning any point of Belief; for the Creed and the Ten Commandments being the two Ingredients of the poſitive part of our Baptiſmal Vow; it is as neceſſary that we be certainly directed in the one as in the other; and if there were any preference to be admitted here, certainly it muſt be for that which is more practical, and of greater extent.

Upon theſe two grounds I ſubſume, that all the Characters of Oral Tradition, by which they can pretend to find it out in any one particular, agree to this Doctrine of the Popes power of depoſing Princes that are either Hereticks, or favourers of them. The way sof ſearching for Tradition are theſe four: Firſt what the Writers aud Doctors of the Church have delivered down from one age to another. The ſecond is what the Popes have taught and pronounced *ex Cathedrâ*, which to a great part of that Communion is Deciſive, their authority being held Infallible; and to the reſt it is at leaſt a great Indication of the

the Tradition of ſuch an Age. The third is, what ſuch Councils as are eſteemed and received as Oecumenical Councils have decreed as General Rules. The fourth is, the late famous Method of Preſcription, when from the received Doctrine of any one Age we run a back-ſcent up to the Apoſtles, upon this ſuppoſition that the Doctrine of the Church, chiefly in a viſible and ſenſible thing, could not be changed. Theſe are all the ways imaginable to find out the Tradition of paſt Ages; and they do all agree to this Doctrine.

All the Writers for five or ſix Ages, both Commentators on Scripture, the School-men, the Caſuiſts and Canoniſts agreed in it; ſo that Cardinal *Perron* had reaſon to challenge thoſe of the contrary perſuaſion to ſhew any one Writer before *Calvin*'s time, that had been of another mind. We do not cite this as a proof, becauſe Cardinal *Perron* ſaid ſo, but becauſe the thing in it ſelf cannot be diſproved; and in the Conteſts that fell in between the Popes and thoſe Princes againſt whom they thundred, no Civilian nor Canoniſt ever denied the Popes power of depoſing in the caſe of Hereſie. It is true, when the Popes pretended to a Tempo-

ral

ral Dominion, and that all Princes were their Vaſſals, ſome were found to write againſt that; other Princes contended about the particulars laid to their charge, and denied that they were either Hereticks or favourers of Hereticks. But none ever diſputed this poſition in general, that in a manifeſt caſe of Hereſie the Pope might not depoſe Princes; and it is too well known what both the *Sorbonne* determined in the caſe of *Henry* the Third, and likewiſe how the body of the Clergy adhered to Cardinal *Perron* in the oppoſition he made to the condemnation of that opinion.

The next mark of Tradition is the Popes pronouncing an opinion *ex Cathedrâ*, that is, in a ſolemn Judiciary way, founding it on Scripture and Tradition. If Popes had only brutally made War upon ſome Princes, and violently thruſt them out of their Dominions, this indeed were no mark by which we could judge of a Tradition: But when we find *Gregory* the Seventh, and many Popes ſince his time, found this authority on paſſages of Scripture, as that of the *Keys being given to S.* Peter, Jeremiah *the Prophet's being ſet over Kingdomes to root out, to pluck up and*

Lib. 8. Ep. 21.

Extravag. de Major. & Obed. cap. 1.

deſtroy, and that all power in Heaven and Earth was given to Chriſt; and his bidding his Diſciples to *buy a Sword*, we muſt look on this as the declaring the Tradition of the Church. So that it muſt either be confeſſed that they are not faithful conveyers of it, or that this is truly the Tradition of the Church. And this has been done ſo often theſe laſt ſix hundred years, that it were a needleſs impoſing on the Readers patience to go about the proving it.

The Third Indication of Tradition is the Declaration made by Synods, but chiefly by General Councils. I need not here mention the many *Roman* Synods that have concurred with the Popes in the Depoſitions which they thundered out againſt Kings or Emperours, ſince we have greater authorities confirming it. The Third Council of *Lateran* declared that all Princes that favoured Hereſie fell from their Dominions, and they granted a Plenary Indulgence to all that fought againſt them. The Fourth Council of the *Lateran* veſted the Pope with the power of giving away their Dominions, if they continued for a year obſtinate in that their merciful diſpoſition of not extirpating Hereticks. The firſt Coun-

Later. 3. c. 28.

Later. 4. cap. 3.

cil

cil of *Lions* concurred with the Pope in the depoſition of the Emperour *Frederick* the Second, which is grounded in the preamble on the *power of binding and looſing given to S.* Peter.

After theſe came the Council of *Conſtance*, and they reckoning themſelves ſuperiour to the Pope, lookt on this as a power inherent in the Church, and ſo aſſumed it to themſelves; and therefore put this Sanction in many of their Decrees, particularly in that for maintaining the Rights of the Church, and in the Paſsports they granted, which had been often added in the Bulls that confirmed the foundations of Monaſteries, that if any, whether he were Emperour, King, or of what Dignity ſoever he might be, oppoſed their Order, he ſhould thereby forfeit his Dignity. The Council of *Sienna* confirmed all Decrees againſt Hereticks, and the favourers of them, that had been made in any former Councils, and by conſequence thoſe of the Third and Fourth Councils in the *Lateran*. The Council of *Baſil* put that threatening clauſe of forfeiture, uſed by thoſe of *Conſtance*, in their Decree for a General Council: And at *Trent* it was de-

Conſt. Seſſ 11, 13, 17, 19.

Trid. Seſſ. 25. *c.* 19.

clared, That if any Prince did ſuffer a Duel to be fought in his Dominions, he was thereupon to forfeit that place in which it was fought. Now by the ſame authority that they could declare a forfeiture of any one place, they could declare a forfeiture of a Princes whole Dominion; for both thoſe Sentences flow from the ſame Superiour Jurisdiction: And thus we ſee ſeven of thoſe Councils which they eſteem general, have either decreed, confirmed, or aſſumed this right of Depoſing Kings, for Hereſie, or indeed for breaking their Orders and Writs.

4. The fourth mark of Tradition is that which has been of late ſo famous by Mr. *Arnauld*'s endeavours to prove from thence that the belief of the Corporal Preſence in the Sacrament is a Doctrine derived down from the Apoſtles days, which is this: If any one Age has univerſally received an opinion as an Article of Faith, it muſt be concluded that that Age had it from the former, and that from the preceding till we arrive at the Apoſtles days: And this he thinks muſt hold the ſtronger, if the point ſo received was a thing obvious to all men,

men, in which every one was concern-ed, and to which the nature of man was inclined to make a powerful op-poſition. I ſhall not examine how true this is in general, nor how applicable in fact it is to the Doctrine of the Cor-poral Preſence; but ſhall only ſay that allowing all theſe marks to be the ſure Indications of Apoſtolical Tradition, the Doctrine of Depoſing Princes for favouring Hereſie, has them all much more indiſputably than the other has. Take any one Age from the eleventh Century to the ſixteenth, and it will appear that not only the Popes, the Bi-ſhops, and all the Eccleſiaſtical Order received it, but that all the Laity like-wiſe embraced it: Though this was a matter obvious to ſenſe, in which ma-ny were much concerned. It might have been hoped that Princes upon their own account for fear of an ill Precedent, would have protected the Depoſed Prince: But on the contrary, they either entred into the Croiſades themſelves, or at leaſt gave way to them: vaſt Armies were gathered to-gether to execute thoſe Sentences, and the injured Princes had no way to keep their people firm to them, but by aſſuring them they were not guil-

ty

ty of the matters objected to them, which ſhewed that had their people believed them guilty, they had forſaken them: And yet as it was, the terrour of a Croiſade was ſuch, and the Popes authority to depoſe Princes was ſo firmly believed, that they were for the moſt part forced to ſave themſelves by an abſolute ſubmiſſion to the Popes pleaſure, and to what Conditions or Penances a haughty Pope would impoſe on them. So certain it is that this Doctrine was univerſally received in thoſe ages.

And thus it appears that all the Characters by which it can be pretended that an Apoſtolicnl Tradition can be known, agree to this Doctrine in ſo full and unconteſtable a manner, that they cannot bring ſuch Evidence for the points in diſpute between them and us. So that the Aſſembly General by condemning this Doctrine, have departed from the Tradition of their own Church more apparently than it can be pretended that either *Luther* and *Calvin* did in any of thoſe Doctrines which they rejected; and therefore they ought not any more to complain of us for throwing off ſuch things as they found on Tradition, when they have

have ſet us ſuch an Example. From which I ſhall only infer this, That they themſelves muſt know how weak a foundation Oral Tradition is for Divine Faith to build upon, and that it muſt be eſtabliſhed upon ſurer grounds.

FINIS.

ERRATUM.

Page 85. line 21. for *Firſt* read *Second.*

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